

TREE HUGGERS

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EXT. WOODS - DAY

BRIAN UPSON, 55, long dreadlocks, sandals and dressed in a military jacket and combat trousers. He's in great shape, super fit and strong. An animal rights activist since he was the age of 14. He walks along with STEPHEN KRETINSKY, 33, handsome with a shaved head. Bright blue eyes and a happy smile. They've both got a heavy backpack on each, trekking through the dense woods. Thick with ancient trees. Brian leads the way.

BRIAN

This isn't just an ordinary tree, its an English oak tree, and we must protect it. We must act as though we plan never leave its side. As if, under its majestic branches, we plan to make our forever homes.

STEPHEN

Whatever it takes Brian. I just want to show you I'm game. That I can do this.

BRIAN

Yes, quite. This will be a good test for you.

Stephen puffs his chest out, still smiling.

STEPHEN

I'm up for it.

BRIAN

I will ask you tonight and then we'll see. This kind of life isn't for the faint of heart.

STEPHEN

I'm here for the long run Brian. You'll see I'm useful.

BRIAN

(rolling his eyes)
Yes, yes. And here comes the speech.

STEPHEN

(smiling)
Don't tease.

BRIAN

We'll see how you handle this task
won't we. This test if you like. I
will be keeping a very close watch
over you. Everything you do, I will
see it.

Stephen places a hand against his heart.

STEPHEN

I know I can be of use to you and
the Earth fighters.

Brian stops, turns to face Stephen, furious.

BRIAN

Don't call us that. That is a cheap
shortening of our name that the
media and the pigs have given to
us. We are not the Earth fighters.
We are the Earth freedom defence
fighters.

Stephen stops with him, confused at this change in him.

STEPHEN

I'm sorry. I didn't mean anything
by it. I just want to be useful.
You know?

BRIAN

Do you care about this tree at all.
This tree that is 500 years old.
All the history that it has seen.
The rise and fall of men over five
generations. And still it stands.
Do you care about it?

STEPHEN

Yeah. Of course I do.

BRIAN

They want to cut it down to make
room for a fucking road. 500 years
of life removed for a fucking road.
Do you care about that?

STEPHEN

Yeah.

Brian steps closer to Stephen and jabs a finger hard into the
middle of his chest.

BRIAN

Do you?

STEPHEN

I wouldn't be here if I didn't.

Brian jabs Stephen in the middle of his chest again, harder.

BRIAN

Then let me hear you. Sing it from your soul.

(singing)

'I care about this tree. I will lay down my life for this tree.'

STEPHEN

(confused)

What?

Brian explodes, furious, he presses his head against Stephen's.

BRIAN

Sing the fucking song or we go no further. This isn't a fucking game. This is the life, you want to play with me, you sing the fucking song or we stop right here. I won't take another fucking step.

Stephen swallows nervous.

STEPHEN

(shyly sings)

'I care about this tree.'

Brian bursts out laughing. He relaxes, he takes a step back from Stephen.

BRIAN

Wonderful. Keep going.

STEPHEN

(singing)

'I will lay down my life for this tree.'

BRIAN

That's it, yes. Then lets go save it.

Brian turns on his heels and continues on through the woods, leading the way again. Stephen breathes a sigh of relief and races after him. Important to keep close.

STEPHEN

You scared me then.

BRIAN

Good. Fear is our friend right now. Men with axes and chainsaws are coming. With bulldozers and diggers. Fear is something that will be with us throughout all of this. Get used to it. Hold it to your bosom as a lover. Know it, as much as you can.

Stephen gets up alongside Brian, glances across at him and smiles.

STEPHEN

I know what I have to do, I'm just glad you've picked me.

BRIAN

(laughing at him)

I've have been nothing but disappointed since you bullied your way into my life. This is your last chance to impress me Stephen, and I'm not holding my breath. I don't think you've got it in you. You're lazy, thick headed. And dull.

STEPHEN

(hurt)

Well, should we just head back then?

Brian wags a finger at Stephen.

BRIAN

You see. Already giving up. And you think you can become part of my team. My world. We travel all around the country. Sometimes breaking the law. Bending the rules. We are hunted by the pigs. The government wants to see me locked up, but would be much happier if I were simply killed. I have put my life on the line and I don't plan on dying for many years yet.

Stephen frowns.

STEPHEN

You guys have done some pretty fucked up shit though. That fire at the pig farm was you guys wasn't it. Ten people died in that fire. That's a little more than bending the rules.

Brian scowls, wags the same finger at Stephen.

BRIAN

Alleged, no proof. And proof is what is needed Stephen.

STEPHEN

OK, but that puppy farm, about six months ago, you guys are the ones behind that. Letting all those dogs loose. That was wild. Caused chaos when they got onto the highway.

BRIAN

That did make me laugh too. But I'm not saying that was us either.

Stephen laughs.

STEPHEN

Are you going to admit to anything?

Brian looks Stephen up and down.

BRIAN

To you, no.

STEPHEN

Don't you trust me?

BRIAN

I don't trust anyone. I can't afford to. But I do need members. Don't let me down Stephen. Prove me wrong. Show me that you're more than the failure that I believe you are.

Stephen lets out a long deep breath, frustrated.

STEPHEN

I'll try.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Brian leads them both seemingly into untouched woodlands, they have to push and fight their way to continue on. Overgrown and wild. Lots of bugs in the air. Brian isn't affected, Stephen though, is disgusted.

STEPHEN

Jesus Christ this is a lot of
fucking flies.

Stephen swots his hands about in front of him, tries to keep the flies from his face.

BRIAN

This is what real nature looks
like. Breathe it in.

STEPHEN

I'd rather not, don't want any of
these fuckers getting stuck in my
throat.

BRIAN

Enjoy it. This is what real life
is. The life God created for us,
his children.

Brian takes down deep breaths, arms out stretched. Stephen has had enough, a fly lands on his arm. SLAP. He hits it and kills it.

STEPHEN

Got the bastard.

Brian grabs onto Stephens arm, inspects the dead fly, horrified.

BRIAN

What the fuck did you just do?

Stephen nervously laughs.

STEPHEN

What? It's just a shitty fly.

Brian now slaps Stephen about the face, once, twice, three times and four. Stephen reaches up, grabs a hold of Brian's wrists, it's the only way to stop him.

A quick wrestling match between them, Brian tries to yank his arms free but Stephen holds onto him, tight.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Stop it. What the fuck?

BRIAN
Life is life.

STEPHEN
Stop hitting me. Jesus. Stop.

BRIAN
I catch you taking just one more
life, it's over for you. You're
out. I'll leave you here to rot.

STEPHEN
Out? I'm not even in?

BRIAN
Forget about it. No chance. You
have no value for life do you?

STEPHEN
It's just a fly.

BRIAN
You're ignorant. A fucking ignorant
baboon of a man. Here, surrounded
by all this. All these trees.
Welcome Stephen. You're finally
home, you ignorant fucking baboon.
Go climb a tree you moron, I'm
going home. You stay here.

Brian yanks his arms free from Stephen's grip. He heads back
the way they came.

STEPHEN
You can't be serious?

BRIAN
Goodbye Stephen.

Stephen races after him, gets himself in front of Brian.

STEPHEN
Wait. I'm sorry. I'll try harder.

Brian side steps him and keeps going. Stephen won't be beat,
he runs around again, catches up to him again, stops and
stands in front of him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

What about the tree. If we go back now, there's not going to be anyone around to protect it?

Brian pushes Stephen out of the way.

BRIAN

A rehearsed speech, and you're not fooling anyone.

Stephen gets back in front of him, younger, fitter and faster than Brian.

STEPHEN

(yelling)
Let me finish.

Brian takes a breath, studies Stephen, thinks about it, then relaxes.

BRIAN

Alright. Go on then, speak.

STEPHEN

I need this. I'll try harder. I promise. Whatever you want. I'll do it.

BRIAN

You take another life and it's over.

STEPHEN

OK. Yes. I'll try. I'll do it. Don't leave now.

BRIAN

Lower your arms. Keep your hands down by your sides. Don't take a fighting stance with me.

Stephen nods, obeys. Brian grins, takes aim and slaps Stephen hard across the face again. Leaves a bright red mark.

STEPHEN

(gritted teeth)
Why?

BRIAN

This is another test. You agree that I am the teacher and you the student?

(Stephen nods)

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Then you will have to pass many
tests.

Brian slaps Stephen again, even harder.

STEPHEN
(hurt)
Fuck.

BRIAN
Are you ready?

Stephen drops his head, nods.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
You've been warned.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

The two reach a huge ancient tree, it's massive, many far
reaching branches full of leaves.

Brian and Stephen drop down their backpacks. Stephen takes
the tree in.

STEPHEN
OK. That's impressive.

BRIAN
You see.

Stephen coughs and spits, exhausted.

STEPHEN
But fucking hell, that fucking hike
up here almost killed me. How long
was that, 8 hours?

BRIAN
Alone, I could have done it in 5
hours.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Well, the good news is now, we get
to rest.

Brian fetches out a long thick metal chain from his backpack.
He wraps it a few times around Stephen's waist.

STEPHEN
OK, not too tight please. I still
want to be comfortable.

Brian then attaches the other end of the chain to the tree.

BRIAN
There. Secured.

Stephen pulls on the chain, it's strong. The lock heavy, hard to break. Stephen takes a look around at the overgrown trees and grass all around them.

STEPHEN
(nervous)
Does anyone know that we're out here? Like, have you told anyone?

Brian wraps the other end of the chain around his own waist, attaches himself to the tree as well. Both of them chained up, neither of them is going anywhere.

BRIAN
We're lucky to be out here. Make no mistake about it.

Stephen laughs nervous.

STEPHEN
Yeah, no doubt. But you didn't answer my question, does anyone know we're out here?

BRIAN
This tree needs our protection. We are here for it. And we will need to sacrifice ourselves for it.

Stephen holds his hands together.

STEPHEN
(pleading)
OK, OK. Let me finish alright. Does anyone know we're here?

BRIAN
(nods)
There are people coming, people who want to cut this beautiful tree down.

Stephen looks around, frowns.

STEPHEN
I can't imagine anyone making it out here.

BRIAN

Then you don't have much of an imagination then do you?

STEPHEN

Get out here how? It took us long enough. What kind of fucking road are they building out here? A road to where?

Brian now starts to remove all of his clothes. Quickly strips.

BRIAN

Feel it. This is what life is all about.

Brian strips down to just his underwear. Stephen chuckles, confused.

STEPHEN

Brian. What the fuck are you doing?

BRIAN

Join me.

STEPHEN

No. I hate being cold. Think I'm going to keep my clothes on if that's alright?

Brian even takes off his shoes and socks, barefoot. Just his underwear and nothing else. He reaches down into the dirt around the base of the tree, rubs it all over his face. Groans with pleasure as he does it.

BRIAN

Connection. We must both make a connection to this wonderful tree. As its heartbeats so must ours.

Stephen stands still, doesn't know what to do.

STEPHEN

Alright. OK. I don't follow.

Brian shoots Stephen a disgusted look, still rubs the dirt all over his own face. He grabs fistfuls of it, gives himself a dirt bath.

As though he's in the shower, and the dirt is shampoo.

BRIAN

Connect with this tree now. How the hell are you going to be it's protector if you're not connected to it. If it's nothing to you. If it's a foreign thing that is far away. Far away. You're here, now. So is this tree. We must not allow this tree to die. A single cut against it is a failure. Connect with it. Connect with it now.

STEPHEN

Alright. Let me try.

Stephen places both hands against it. Then presses the side of his face against it.

Brian throws a handful of dirt at Stephen.

BRIAN

Rub it in.

STEPHEN

That's not my thing.

BRIAN

Do it now.

STEPHEN

Hey---

BRIAN

---pick up the dirt and rub it onto your face.

STEPHEN

I don't want to.

BRIAN

I don't care. Do it or you'll never get in, you'll never be apart of the Earth freedom defence fighters. I will make a vow never to let you in.

Stephen reluctantly picks up the mound of dirt that Brian threw at him. He slowly rubs it against his face, not happy but does it all the same.

He looks across at Brian, dirt all over his face.

STEPHEN

There. Happy?

Brian nods, his own face stained in dirt, Brian now rubs it all over his body, legs and arms. Does it quickly, aggressively.

BRIAN

Good, you're learning. And don't you feel good? Don't you feel alive?

Stephen still rubs the handful of dirt all over his face.

STEPHEN

(depressed)
Yeah, this is great.

INT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Stephen paces up and down, rubs his arms and stamps his feet. But chained to the tree he can't get very far.

STEPHEN

It's so cold. Brian, where are the supplies. You've done this before right?

Brian sits comfortably, rests against the tree, still only dressed in his underpants. The cold night air has no effect on him.

BRIAN

I love it. We have lost who we really are in our human comforts. For hundreds of thousands of years this is how humans lived. Those years we were all purely alive. And now, with our phones, beds and heating we have become weak, and with that weakness comes depression. And from that depression comes abuse. The world is sick and so are all humans. Sick from abuse.

STEPHEN

But it's freezing. Brian, you need to put some clothes on.

Brian rises up, moves onto his knees. He looks up at the night sky and howls like a wolf, loud and proud. He gets onto all fours and continues to howl.

BRIAN

I can feel everything. My heart, my lungs, my very soul. You, wrapped up in your fake materials, feel nothing.

STEPHEN

No, I'm feeling a lot.

BRIAN

Cutting yourself off from a real experience.

STEPHEN

I don't like being cold.

BRIAN

You don't know what you like, you don't know anything yet.

Stephen rubs his arms, tries to keep himself warm.

STEPHEN

I know a few things.

BRIAN

No, you don't.

STEPHEN

Well I'm here with you, I'm showing you that I want to help. I'm showing you that I want to do something. I see the world dying. It's warming up. We're destroying everything. That's why I sought you out. You and the others. And I managed to do it didn't I? So I must know something.

Brian now stands up, walks to the maximum length that his chain will allow. He drops back down to his knees and with his bare hands he digs out a hole. Scratching at the ground.

BRIAN

Maybe you're just lucky.

STEPHEN

Or smarter than you think, maybe?

BRIAN

No, I don't think so. And as a smart person, I know another when I see one. When an addict sees another addict they know.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

When a whore sees another whore,
they know. And when an educated man
sees another, he knows. And when I
look at you, I don't see an equal.
Far from it. I see an underling.

STEPHEN

You want a hand with that hole?

BRIAN

I'll finish it shortly. Doesn't
need two of us. In fact, I've got
the correct technique. The
Karamojong tribe in Africa build
similar traps to catch their pray.

Stephen steps across to Brian, peers down and watches what
he's doing.

STEPHEN

And is that what you're hoping for,
to catch something?

BRIAN

Of sorts, but not anything worth
eating. Not even the Karamojong
tribe would be interested in what's
going in here. Perhaps some German
sex dungeon could find some use for
it though.

Stephen laughs, shakes his head.

STEPHEN

I'm lost Brian.

BRIAN

Our waste. Our human waste. Or to
use clear language for you, our
shit and piss.

Stephen raises an eyebrow.

STEPHEN

Great.

BRIAN

We are chained to a tree Stephen,
if you were hoping for comfort
you're in for a great
disappointment.

Stephen turns his back onto Brian, looks back up at the tree.

STEPHEN

I know what I'm doing here. Really I do. I think it's about time you let me join in, do something. Or even just meet the others.

Now it's Brian's turn to raise an eyebrow.

BRIAN

Others?

STEPHEN

How many members have you got all together?

BRIAN

I'm not sure.

STEPHEN

You're the one who picks, you have the final say for who gets to join?

BRIAN

(nods)

Someone has to.

STEPHEN

Will I have to move home? Where are you all based?

BRIAN

Focus on the tree Stephen.

Stephen turns back to Brian, watches as the hole gets bigger.

STEPHEN

But there's stuff I need to know.

BRIAN

Why?

STEPHEN

(annoyed)

I'm here with you chained to a fucking tree. You've got to trust me.

BRIAN

Don't' forget why you're here. A test. Focus on passing the test.

STEPHEN

(scoffs)

And if I don't pass?

BRIAN
You won't be allowed in.

Stephen shuffles closer to Brian.

STEPHEN
(upset)
No, please. I need this. Really.
Look at me, I'll be a loyal soldier
for you.

BRIAN
You fail this little test and you
will wish you had never met me.

STEPHEN
Alright. I'm here. I'm ready.

BRIAN
No more questions.

STEPHEN
Fine.

BRIAN
Howl with me.

Brian continues to dig out the hole, with a smile he again howls like a wolf. Stephen, awkwardly joins in. Howling with a bad impression of a wolf, not as accomplished as Brian.

INT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Brian sets up a small camera onto the tree, then attaches small go pro cameras onto himself and onto Stephen. Positioned into the middle of their chests.

STEPHEN
So you do trust me?

BRIAN
It's just a camera Stephen. Scares
off the loggers. Don't like having
their faces beamed across the
internet. Like all weak men, they
can't handle accountability.

STEPHEN
(giggles)
You're a pacifist now?

BRIAN
These sound like more questions?

STEPHEN

It's just I thought you were more gangster. Liked your explosions. That's what attracted me to you in the first place.

Brian looks him up and down.

BRIAN

So, you're not one for the gentle approach?

Stephen shakes his head.

STEPHEN

People have tried the gentle approach and the earth is still being raped. Right?

Brian gives him a thumbs up.

BRIAN

Good, Stephen. Good. Finally you're sounding like someone I could have a conversation with.

STEPHEN

You're not one for the gentle approach.

BRIAN

(curious)
No?

STEPHEN

Like when you blew up that oil refinery. Not very gentle was it?

BRIAN

Men were killed. The media labelled me a mad man. A villain.

STEPHEN

People attack what they don't understand.

BRIAN

Do you understand?

Stephen nods, puffs out his chest.

STEPHEN

(serious)
You need to crack a few eggs.

BRIAN
(chuckles)
More than a few.

STEPHEN
So it was you?

BRIAN
Questions, questions, questions.
Always questions with you Stephen.

STEPHEN
Violence gets people to listen.

BRIAN
They could be here any minute. And
if they think they can get away
with it, they will kill us. Are you
ready to die Stephen? We both need
to be ready.

Stephen looks away, nervous.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen walks around the tree, bored. Claps his hands
together, drags his feet.

Brian sits on a low lying branch, the only one the reach of
the chain will allow him to sit on.

STEPHEN
So when are the others coming?

BRIAN
What others?

STEPHEN
(nervous)
You know. From your group. Your
gang. Your members. The others.
When do they get here?

BRIAN
They won't be.

STEPHEN
Why?

BRIAN
No others are coming.

STEPHEN
So it's just us?

Brian looks down at Stephen.

BRIAN
(curious)
Does that matter?

STEPHEN
(laughs nervous)
Kind of.

BRIAN
They have their own missions.

STEPHEN
As exciting as this?

BRIAN
I warned you Stephen what this was
going to be.

STEPHEN
Others need to come and take our
place though?

BRIAN
As long as this tree is safe,
nothing else should matter.

STEPHEN
(annoyed)
But what's plan B?

BRIAN
(confused)
Plan B, for what?

Stephen gestures frantically to both of them.

STEPHEN
For us.

BRIAN
We are where we need to be. Relax.
You need to save your energy.

STEPHEN
How long are we out here for?

BRIAN

I'm willing to stay out here for as long as it takes. If you want an escape plan, there is none.

STEPHEN

But that doesn't make sense. We can't just stay out here forever.

Brian nods.

BRIAN

(disagrees)

Until this tree is safe.

STEPHEN

But, you've got a whole crew Brian. At some point they're going to have to take our place.

BRIAN

No, this is our place.

Stephen is getting visibly frustrated.

STEPHEN

(shouts)

Let me finish Brian. Let me finish what I'm trying to say.

BRIAN

This tree is a part of us now.

STEPHEN

(snaps)

Let me finish god damn it. What if no one comes?

BRIAN

They will.

Stephen gestures out to the thick overgrown woods all around them.

STEPHEN

From where Brian? I really think you might have picked the wrong spot.

Brian laughs dismissively at him. Pats his hands against the trunk of the tree.

BRIAN

Look at this wonderful tree and tell me you are not struck by the magical awe of it. The wrong tree? You do say some laughable things Stephen. Laughable.

Brian fake laughs at Stephen, horribly forced.

STEPHEN

It took us long enough to get out here. How long is it going to take a group of guys with chainsaws to get out here just for this tree. For one tree?

BRIAN

This tree is the biggest in these woods. It is like the leader of all the other trees. Their king. We are in the middle of a war Stephen. Those who want to save the environment against those who wish to destroy it.

STEPHEN

Yeah, I'm all in with that Brian---

BRIAN

(raising his voice)
---So what do you do when you want to win a war. You kill the leader of your enemy. They kill this tree and the others will fall.

Stephen lets out a long deep breath.

STEPHEN

(frustrated)
But these guys wanting this tree. They're not out there.

BRIAN

How do you know?

STEPHEN

They'd be obvious. We'd see them. High visibility jackets aren't hard to spot.

BRIAN

Who says their not in camouflage. The uniform of a soldier don't forget.

STEPHEN

They're not out there.

BRIAN

Hiding, waiting. The moment we give up. Then they strike. All we have to do is remain steadfast.

STEPHEN

They're not out there Brian.

BRIAN

Your eyes play tricks on you.

STEPHEN

They're at home. In the warmth. About to go to bed. We're the only ones out here.

BRIAN

Then I guess we're the lucky ones.

STEPHEN

What's the plan Brian, what are we really doing out here?

BRIAN

To save this tree.

STEPHEN

No.

BRIAN

Yes.

STEPHEN

Let me finish. You have to let me finish---

Brian shakes his head, interrupting yet again.

BRIAN

---This tree is your focus. This tree is your life. There are men out there. Close by. Hiding. Waiting to kill this tree, your life Stephen. And you want to pack up and turn your back onto them? A foolish plan indeed.

STEPHEN

There's no one out there.

BRIAN

(nods)

Out there waiting. For just one chance. And you want to offer it to them?

STEPHEN

You're not listening to me.

BRIAN

You are here with me now. Chained to this tree with me. There is no going back. We are here. You will complete the mission you agreed to. No amount of idiotic words you use will change that.

STEPHEN

So that's it, I don't matter?

BRIAN

No.

STEPHEN

This isn't a plan Brian. This is madness. Chained to a random tree?

BRIAN

And you better learn to like it.

STEPHEN

There's no one out there.

BRIAN

Lies. They are there. If you look, you will see them. But you're not looking are you?

STEPHEN

(upset)

Please. Tell me someone else is coming?

BRIAN

Lies.

STEPHEN

Brian.

BRIAN

Stephen.

STEPHEN

Brian, you need to listen to me.

BRIAN

Save your energy. Protect this tree. There is nothing else.

Stephen collapses to the ground, exhausted. He fights not to cry, takes all his inner strength. Shakes his head, mutters under his breath. Stephen already looks like a defeated man.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Brian, still only dressed in his underpants is fast asleep, curled up at the base of the tree.

Stephen, wide away creeps slowly over towards him, tries not to make any sound.

But his feet step onto branches and dead leaves, it's hard to be silent. Impossible.

He gets over to him, scared to breathe, Stephen kneels down to where Brian has piled up his removed clothes. Stephen goes through the pockets, searching.

STEPHEN

(hissing)

Come on, where the fuck is it?

Brian rises up silently, now awake. He watches Stephen.

BRIAN

What on earth are you doing boy?

Stephen drops the clothes, spins around to face Brian, eyes wide and filled with panic.

STEPHEN

(scared)

Who, me?

BRIAN

As you've so eloquently pointed out, we're the only ones out here. What are you doing with my clothes? Tell me now or we're going to have a problem.

STEPHEN

(nervous)

Relax, I'm sorry OK.

Brian is angry, leans closer to Stephen, presses his forehead against Stephen's. Fists clenched, Brian is ready to fight.

BRIAN
Sorry for doing what?

STEPHEN
I'm cold. I can't sleep.

Brian relaxes.

BRIAN
You should be fine. You might be sick?

STEPHEN
I've always struggled with being cold. I just like being warm.

BRIAN
And you need your sleep?

Stephen nods.

STEPHEN
But I can't sleep when I feel like I'm this cold.

Brian lays back down, pats onto the ground in front of him.

BRIAN
Lay down with me.

STEPHEN
Excuse me?

Brian still pats his hand onto the ground just in front of him.

BRIAN
Our bodies together, I'll keep you warm.

Stephen holds onto Brian's discarded clothes.

STEPHEN
Maybe if I wore your clothes too. Extra layers?

Shakes his head.

BRIAN
No, those our my clothes. Not yours.

Stephen laughs, nervous.

STEPHEN

But you're not wearing them and I'm cold.

BRIAN

You'll only make yourself sweat, I don't want your sweat soaking my clothes. You're only going to make yourself feel worse. Lie here with me now.

Stephen places Brian's clothes back down onto the ground. He takes his place lying with Brian. Brian puts an arm around Stephen and pulls him close. Stephen is horrified.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Now sleep.

Brian closes his eyes and seems to instantly fall asleep again.

Stephen's eyes are still wide open. He stares at Brian's clothes. He can still reach them. He continues to search them. Turns out all the pockets he can find, but all these pockets are empty.

Brian starts to snore, coughs and grunts as he sleeps.

STEPHEN

(groaning)

Fucking gross.

Stephen is stuck, can't get up and can't roll out. Brian with an arm around him keeps a tight hold of him.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen sits on the ground, head in his hands. He's exhausted, doesn't look like he slept at all last night.

Brian with a flick knife in his hand is busy whittling, humming to himself.

BRIAN

Cheer up Stephen, it's another beautiful day.

STEPHEN

I don't feel so good.

BRIAN

You're fine. Stop whining.

STEPHEN
This is hard.

BRIAN
Perhaps for you.

STEPHEN
And for you too.

Brian shakes his head, confident.

BRIAN
No.

Stephen looks up and across at him, angry.

STEPHEN
Don't lie.

BRIAN
Does it look like I'm struggling?

STEPHEN
Well, how come you don't do this more often?

Brian gives Stephen a suspicious look.

BRIAN
What do you mean, don't doubt my commitment boy.

Stephen checks himself, forces another fake smile.

STEPHEN
I'm not. I love what you do. I want to be a part of it.

BRIAN
Then your comment. Explain it.

STEPHEN
You do those attacks. That's what you do. You attack. Not sit in. You're more about explosions and huge media attention. Chaining to a tree, doesn't seem like your style.

BRIAN
I spent most of my youth committed to sit in protests.

STEPHEN

But the last few years. Terrorist style attacks seem to be your style?

Brian, enraged rushes over to Stephen, holds the tip of his flick knife to his neck.

BRIAN

Terrorist attacks? How dare you! I warned you not to use that word, didn't I?

Stephen holds up his hands in surrender.

STEPHEN

What? I'm sorry.

BRIAN

I have never committed a terrorist attack. Do you wish for me to cut out your fucking tongue?

STEPHEN

No, I'm sorry.

BRIAN

Just who are you really? Out with it boy. Who the fuck are you?

STEPHEN

I'm you. I'm one of you.

BRIAN

Lier.

Brian slashes the knife at Stephen, cuts the right side of his face. Stephen holds his hands to his bleeding cheek.

STEPHEN

I'm sorry.

BRIAN

I'm no terrorist!

STEPHEN

I'm sorry.

BRIAN

Then why did you say it?

STEPHEN

I don't know.

BRIAN
Say now or I'll cut you again.

STEPHEN
I'm sorry.

Brian as promised cuts Stephen again, on the other side of his face.

BRIAN
Out with it.

STEPHEN
(terrified)
You plant bombs. You burn
buildings to the ground. You've had
people killed.

BRIAN
I'm not admitting anything to you.

STEPHEN
But you've done all those things.

BRIAN
(yelling)
Terrorists kill for their ego. I
have no ego. If I did any of those
things you say I have done, it was
for the best for mother earth. She
can not protect herself. This tree
cannot protect itself. The ice caps
can not protect themselves. If you
wish for me to shed a tear for
those people who were blown up and
killed for trying to destroy the
earth, I will not.

STEPHEN
I'm sorry.

BRIAN
I am no terrorist. I am a fighter.
A protector. Don't insult me like
that again.

STEPHEN
I'm so sorry. Please. Put the knife
down.

BRIAN
Put your hands down.

STEPHEN

No.

Brian raises his voice, gets even closer to Stephen.

BRIAN

I said put your hands down boy.

Stephen reluctantly complies. The two cuts on either side of his face are deep, blood oozing out and trickles down his chin.

STEPHEN

OK.

BRIAN

Why are you here?

STEPHEN

You already know why.

BRIAN

Then tell me again.

STEPHEN

I wanted to join. You're the leader. You choose who gets in. I wanted you to see me, to get to know me. I wanted to be apart of the resistance. I quit my job for this. Turned my back onto my family. And now I'm chained to a tree that isn't going to get cut down, but you're cutting my fucking face open.

BRIAN

I am the leader.

STEPHEN

Alright.

BRIAN

And I make the choices. So tell me. Are you truly hardcore or a fucking fake. The real deal or some child attempting to live out a dangerous fantasy in the company of real men?

STEPHEN

I'm the real deal. I think. Anyway.

BRIAN

You think. Not good enough. You need to know. It's not enough just to think.

STEPHEN

I thought I was, but if this is how you're going to use me. Cutting practice. Then no. I don't think I want to join you anymore. Maybe it's best if I do my own thing. I don't like this. I don't like this at all. I don't like being cut fucking open.

BRIAN

(relaxing)

You're willing to follow my orders?

STEPHEN

Look where I am Brian. Of course. I've been spending the whole time trying to convince you. You just don't listen.

BRIAN

No. I don't listen. I give orders.

STEPHEN

OK.

BRIAN

Are you ready to follow my orders?

Stephen shrugs.

STEPHEN

Sure. Why not.

Brian considers.

BRIAN

We, me and you. We need a connection.

STEPHEN

More mud rubbing?

BRIAN

No. We connected with the tree. Good. But now, me and you. We need a connection.

STEPHEN

I don't know what you mean. I don't want to make you mad but I don't know what you mean.

BRIAN

You'll see.

Brian holds up his left hand, with the flip knife he cuts his palm open. Blood spits out. Brian cuts himself deep but his face shows no change. Like it was nothing at all.

STEPHEN

Jesus Christ Brian, have you lost your fucking mind. You're going to kill us both.

BRIAN

Give me your hand.

STEPHEN

No. Do you see a doctor around here? A hospital, because I don't.

BRIAN

(ordering)

Give me your hand boy.

STEPHEN

We both get infected, then what? Call an ambulance? Yeah we by this massive fucking tree that no one has any interest in cutting down. Come and save us.

Stephen spits out at the ground with disgust.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You're going to fucking kill us both you sociopath.

BRIAN

Give me your hand.

STEPHEN

No.

Brian reaches out with his bleeding left hand, takes hold of Stephen's left wrist. Pulls and drags Stephen up close to him.

BRIAN

We will be blood brothers.

STEPHEN
(scared)
I don't want aids.

Brian studies Stephen's hand.

BRIAN
(cold)
Aids does not exist. You need to wake up to the reality of the world. You've been brainwashed by the few who run the human world. You need to break free. You need to understand nature, be a part of it. You need to understand God himself. You need this connection with me. It will tie us together.

STEPHEN
Please don't do this.

BRIAN
I must.

Stephen shakes his head, begs.

STEPHEN
Please.

BRIAN
I will drag you forwards, I will force you to wake up. I will save you from yourself Stephen.

STEPHEN
Don't do this.

Brian seemingly so much stronger than Stephen turns Stephen's wrist, palm up. He stabs him with the flick knife and cuts his palm open.

Stephen cries out in agony.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
No, fucking hell!

Brian then places both their palms together, grins excited.

BRIAN
We're blood brothers now. My blood in yours and yours in mine. We are connected, we are one. And nothing will break that. No one will separate us now.

Stephen just breaks down into tears.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen and Brian are sat on opposite sides of the tree. Both have makeshift bandages wrapped around their cut open hands. These bandages are soaked in blood. Stephens face is stained in blood, the cuts on his face have started to heal themselves, but he still looks a mess.

STEPHEN

I've got a headache.

BRIAN

There is an old remedy that I always use. Forty minutes of intense Exercise, gets rid of headaches every time.

STEPHEN

I don't want to do that. That doesn't sound good.

BRIAN

Then don't come to me asking for solutions if you're not going to take my advice. Just don't say anything for a while.

STEPHEN

I need some pain killers. And we need more food. Water.

BRIAN

We're fine.

STEPHEN

We could be out here for months before you finally realise no one is coming.

BRIAN

Perhaps. And you'll be here with me.

Stephen stands up. He grabs hold of his bag and shakes it at Brian.

STEPHEN

I don't have months of supplies. I don't have months of food, and water.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

And I've got no pain killers at all. I'm in pain Brian. Can you guess why?

BRIAN

Sit down.

Stephen throws down his bag in disgust. He spits, walks around the tree to face Brian.

STEPHEN

One of us needs to go out for supplies.

BRIAN

Just sit down.

STEPHEN

No. Think. We don't have enough.

BRIAN

You're upset.

STEPHEN

(yelling)
Of course I am.

BRIAN

Go lied down. Go to sleep.

STEPHEN

We'll starve if I don't do something.

BRIAN

We haven't been out here long enough for you to be worried about that. So stop worrying.

STEPHEN

Where's the key?

BRIAN

You're not going anywhere. Just go sit back down.

STEPHEN

(furious)
Have you lost it? You don't even know where it is do you?

Brian rolls his eyes. He reaches underneath a nearby rock. He had hidden the key to the chains underneath it. He waves it at Stephen.

BRIAN
You see. I have it. Happy now?

Stephen swallows nervous, holds out his hand.

STEPHEN
Give it me.

Brian points to the ground.

BRIAN
(annoyed)
Sit down Stephen.

Stephen reaches down, tries to snatch the key from Brian. Brian wrestles with him, both find it hard with their cut hurt hands.

Brian kicks out at Stephen, knocks him down to the ground. Brian then puts the key into his mouth and swallows it quickly.

STEPHEN
(shocked)
What have you done?

Brian holds a hand to his throat.

BRIAN
(hurt)
Now you don't need to worry now.

STEPHEN
We're going to starve out here.

BRIAN
Your mind is all over the place.

Stephen stands up, tries to wriggle out of the chain around his waist, but it's no good.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
The tree is still standing. You should be happy.

Stephen now tries to break the chain at the tree, kicks and pulls at it. It's all pointless.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
(snaps)
Stop that.

Stephen stops.

Brain again points at the ground.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
(ordering)
Sit down.

Stephen falls to his knees, his head down, depressed.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
The tree is safe as long as we are
here. You're not leaving.

Stephen nods. Brian then swallows hard a couple of times.
Holds a hand to his throat, the key seems to be stuck.

Brian continues to swallow seemingly harder and harder, then
smiles happily. Looks like he's finally got the key down into
his stomach.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen empties out his own bag, filled with canned foods and
bottles of water. Nothing fresh, all tinned with long
expiration dates.

Stephen starts to sort the food from his bag into section,
small piles.

STEPHEN
We need to ration what supplies we
do have. We need to know how much
we have and how long it can last.
We need to be smart.

BRIAN
We eat when we're hungry. We drink
when we're thirsty. Seems like a
good system to me. Just put those
things back away.

Stephen shoots Brian an annoyed look.

STEPHEN
(gesturing angrily)
This is all I've got. I'm trying to
make you see. We're already in
trouble.

BRIAN
Just put it away.

Stephen points at Brian's bag.

STEPHEN
Lets see what you've got?

BRIAN
(smirks)
Giving orders now are we?

STEPHEN
(stutters)
I just need to know.

BRIAN
I have my own supply. A supply that
I'm more than happy to share with
you.

Brian grabs onto his bag and unzips it. Filled with booze. Whiskey, wine, gin. Lots of bottles wrapped up in a couple of blankets. He lays them all out in front of Stephen.

Stephen is stunned.

STEPHEN
But, why?

BRIAN
Have a drink with me?

Brian grabs onto one of the wine bottles, unscrews the top and gulps it down.

STEPHEN
This is what you brought?

Brian offers the bottle to Stephen.

BRIAN
Drink.

STEPHEN
No, I need a clear head. We both
do.

BRIAN
The blood of Christ. Drink. We are
in the garden of Eden. The earth is
a gift from the lord God himself.
Drink with me.

Brian first forces the bottle into Stephen's hand, then forces the bottle up, makes Stephen drink. Stephen has some, but most of the wine spills down the front of him. Staining his chest.

Brian pulls the bottle from him, brings it back to his own lips.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Don't be wasteful. You want to talk of rations, but then you let it spill down the front of you like that.

STEPHEN

I'm the only one who brought food, water?

(shouting)

Only me?

BRIAN

(smiling)

Look where we are. Look around you.

STEPHEN

I am. I see. Jesus fucking Christ. I see.

BRIAN

Then look harder. We have everything we need here.

STEPHEN

(furious)

Where? I see no food. I see no water. I can't eat fucking grass Brian.

Brian stands up, drinks more of the wine. Points at the sky.

BRIAN

The sunlight, God sends it down onto us.

STEPHEN

Great, if we're looking to get a tan. But we're not!

BRIAN

How do you think plants survive?

STEPHEN

(stunned)

Plants? We're not fucking plants.

BRIAN

Then what are we?

Stephen shrugs.

STEPHEN
(guessing)
Animals?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN
No.

STEPHEN
Then what?

BRIAN
We are disconnected. That's what I
keep trying to get you to
understand. We need to reconnect to
the gifts that God has given us. We
are his children. But ungrateful,
blind and stupid, we have turned
our backs onto these gifts.

STEPHEN
We still need food.

BRIAN
You do. I don't.

Brian drinks more.

STEPHEN
(points at the bottle)
You're going to survive on that?

BRIAN
I have air in my lungs, sunlight
beaming down onto my skin. What
more can I ask for?

STEPHEN
Bury your feet in the soil and act
like a plant? That's your plan?
Brilliant. I don't even know why I
was worried? What a brilliant
fucking plan that is. You're a
genius.

BRIAN
You brought the food so enjoy it.

Stephen turns to his rationed out piles, stares at them with
fear.

STEPHEN
(deep breath)
Maybe two weeks if I ration it
correctly. Maybe one week if I
share with you?

BRIAN
My supplies will last a month or
two weeks if I share.

Stephen looks over at the bottles.

STEPHEN
Your supplies? You mean your booze?

BRIAN
Yes.

Stephen shakes his head, disgusted. Returns to his food.

STEPHEN
One week of food and water.

BRIAN
Then don't share.

STEPHEN
You're not helping.

BRIAN
I'm enjoying myself. You're so
wrapped up in yourself you can't
even see that this right here is
the best moment of your life.

Stephen can't help but laugh.

STEPHEN
OK. My parents took me to
Disneyland for my birthday. I had
presents and cake. I played and ran
around until I passed out.
(chuckles)
I thought that was the best time of
my life. But no, this, chained to
a tree is. I never would have
guessed.

BRIAN
Put your food away. Come have a
drink with me in this perfect
sunlight. See what god has given
us. What a day. Drink with me.

Stephen shoves all his food back into his bag, zips it closed then picks out a gin bottle from Brian's selection. He sits next to him. Opens the bottle and gulps down a few mouthfuls, defeated.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Good. Look at you, didn't spill a drop that time. You're learning. Stick with me, and I'll open your eyes to what this world really is.

Stephen has some more. Coughs and spits as the gin burns his throat.

STEPHEN

Shit that's strong.

BRIAN

I've brought only the best with me.

STEPHEN

Whatever. Shit. I don't care anymore. I just want to get drunk, I need to sleep. Hopefully this shit knocks me clean out.

BRIAN

You're here. You'll end up seeing the world for what it is, what it was meant to be. Saving this tree is only one small step towards you turning back the tide against those who wish to destroy life. One small step, but stick with me, learn from me and soon you'll be running alongside me. Under the protection of God himself.

STEPHEN

I don't know what you mean, but I do know that I want to get nice and drunk.

They clink their bottles together. Both drink. Stephen can't help but shoot a worried glance over towards his bag of food. Clearly still on his mind. Brian notices this.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Stephen, drunk dances around the tree as Brian cheers him on, clapping.

BRIAN

(singing)

'In the moonlight, he is dancing.
Around the tree, he is dancing.
Under the eyes of God, he is
dancing. In the moonlight, he is
dancing. Around the tree, he is
dancing. Under the eyes of god, he
is dancing'---

Brian finishes off his bottle of wine, grabs onto another.
Can handle is alcohol much better than Stephen.

Stephen exhausted, stops, grabs onto his knees he's sick all
over his legs. Brian laughs at him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

So much for rationing. What a
waste. Go to sleep Stephen. Lay
down.

Stephen is finished being sick, gives Brian a thumbs up then
collapses where he is. He's out cold. Instantly falls into a
deep sleep.

Brian opens up another bottle of wine, singing nonsensical
made up songs to himself.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Early morning, the sun shines down onto them.

Stephen slowly wakes up to the sound of grunts and gulps.
Hungover. He sits up. Sees Brian with several empty tins of
food scattered around him.

Brian has his mouthful, rushes to swallow the food with a big
gulp. Competitive eating.

It takes Stephen a few moments to understand what is
happening. Brian then opens up all the water bottles, turns
them upside down and pours the water out. All Stephen's
tinned food is gone. Brian's mouth is smeared with it. He's
eaten it all.

STEPHEN

What have you done?

BRIAN

It's gone now.

STEPHEN
(explodes)
What the fuck have you done?

Stephen reaches out for his bag, checks it, it's empty.
Nothing at all left inside.

BRIAN
I did this for you. I had to do
this, for you.

Stephen snaps. He throws a punch at Brian. Brian dodges out of the way of it. He throws back a punch at Stephen and connects with the side of Stephen's face, hitting the cut. Causes it to bleed again.

Stephen falls backwards, but forces himself back up again. Stephen throws another punch at Brian, this time connecting with Brian's chest.

Brian rolls backwards, leaps up to his feet.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
(shouting)
I did it for you. Wake up!

Stephen, hung over and still feeling the terrible effects of a long night of drinking gets up onto his own feet. Stands up, unsteady and groggy.

STEPHEN
You ate all my fucking food. You
fucking pig.

BRIAN
I had to do something. You became
obsessed. All you spoke about was
that food. It's all you could think
about. I had to do something. You
should be thanking me.

STEPHEN
I'm going to starve out here now.

BRIAN
No you won't.

STEPHEN
You're insane. You've lost your
mind.

BRIAN

I'm freeing you. Why can't you see it. Why do you insist on being so blind?

STEPHEN

How? How are you freeing me?

BRIAN

All you were focused on was the food. Food. Food. Food. Like a fat piece of shit. That's all you could think about. I've taken it away. I've freed you from your obsession. I've freed you, you moron!

STEPHEN

You've just eaten everything. You're the fat fuck.

BRIAN

I sacrificed myself. For you. I had to.

STEPHEN

No!

BRIAN

Yes.

STEPHEN

No. You've sentenced me to death.

BRIAN

You need to focus on the task at hand. The mission I've given you. You couldn't do it. Thinking about everything but the mission. You were failing. As God as my witness, I will not allow you to fail.

STEPHEN

You fucking bastard. I'll kill you.

Stephen rushes towards Brian, throwing more wild punches at him. He misses more shots than he lands. But he still manages to land a couple clean punches to Brian's face and head.

BRIAN

Stop it.

STEPHEN

No. You fucking bastard.

BRIAN

Stop it.

STEPHEN

Fuck you.

Brian takes out the flick knife, hidden in the back of his underpants. He takes it out and flicks out the blade. Slashes it out in front of him, wild.

BRIAN

(ordering)

Back. Get back. Back you bastard.
I'll cut you into a million pieces.
Back!

Stephen keeps his distance. Brian stands his ground, still slashes out the knife.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'll cut you into tiny pieces if I
have to. Chop, chop, chop!

Stephen steps back.

STEPHEN

(shocked)

You've lost your mind.

BRIAN

Says you. You're the one trying to
kill me.

STEPHEN

I'm chained to a tree with a
madman. What the fuck am I doing
out here?

BRIAN

You need to start listening to me
and doing what I tell you when I
tell you, or you'll never learn.
You'll be trapped here forever.

STEPHEN

I don't want to learn, not anymore.
And not from you.

Stephen returns to the lock that keeps him chained up to the tree. He bashes it. Kicks it, picks a branch up from the ground and tries to pry it open. The branch snaps.

BRIAN
(watching)
What are you doing?

Stephen yanks and pulls on the chain as hard as he can.

STEPHEN
I'm trying to break it. What does
it look like?

BRIAN
You need to stop.

STEPHEN
And you need to let me out of here.

BRIAN
That's not going to happen.

Stephen spins around to face Brian.

STEPHEN
(screaming)
Let me leave.

BRIAN
It's not safe to let you go
anywhere. Look at you, like a
raving madman.

STEPHEN
Let me go!

BRIAN
You need to sit.

Stephen instead tries to climb the tree. He gets onto one of the low hanging branches. The length of the chain around his waist won't let him reach any higher than this.

Stephen cups both hands around his mouth.

STEPHEN
(screaming)
Help me!

Brian keeps a hold of his flip knife, but now holds it down by his side. He moves underneath the branch that Stephen sits on, looks up at Stephen, laughs at him.

BRIAN
(mocking)
Help me. Help.
(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)
(laughs)
What are you doing?

Stephen continues with his screams.

STEPHEN
(throat sore)
Help me. Someone. Anyone. Help me.

BRIAN
(grinning)
Who are you shouting to?

STEPHEN
Anyone! Please! Help me!

BRIAN
Stephen, stop. There is no one out there.

Stephen looks down at Brian.

STEPHEN
(emotional)
You said they were out there. Those loggers. So where are they?
(back to shouting)
Come cut this fucking tree down.
Come on. I dare you. Come on. We're right here. Cut, I won't even stop you.

BRIAN
Just stop it.

Stephen looks down at Brian, tears in his eyes.

STEPHEN
You said they were out there?

Brian shakes his head, feels sorry for Stephen.

BRIAN
There's no one out there. Come down. Get out of the tree. You feel better now? There's no one out there. Get down.

Stephen hugs onto the branch in an act of defiance.

STEPHEN
You said they were coming?

BRIAN

Well, they're not. Obviously they're not. You know we're alone out here. Stop acting like a fool.

STEPHEN

Jesus. I just want to go home.

BRIAN

Well you must complete your test. A test you agreed to. I am watching and God is watching. You can't back out now.

STEPHEN

What about this fucking tree?

BRIAN

It's a personal favourite of mine. But it's not in any danger. There is no road being built out here. We are miles from anyone else. But it truly is a beautiful spot don't you think? You should be happy that you got to see it.

STEPHEN

Then why are we chained to it?

BRIAN

A test. To see if you could handle the pressure. And I must admit you're not doing very well. You've broken already. Where is your resolve, because I'm not seeing it.

STEPHEN

Undo these chains. I've had enough.

BRIAN

No.

STEPHEN

Why?

BRIAN

To protect the tree.

STEPHEN

The tree isn't in any danger.

Brian shrugs.

BRIAN
It doesn't matter.

Stephen shakes the chain that's around his waist.

STEPHEN
Take off these chains.

BRIAN
I can't.

STEPHEN
Of course you fucking can. You put them on, you take them off.

BRIAN
You've started something. You need to see it until the end. This isn't a game. It's real life. You can't just hit the reset button, you have to see it out until the end. You're a man, not a child.

STEPHEN
We're chained to a tree that no one gives a fuck about.

BRIAN
Well, that's where you're wrong, I care very deeply about it. As should you too.

Stephen jump down from the branch, he eyes Brian up with a furious rage. Struggles to keep his breathing steady.

STEPHEN
Undo these chains. This test is over. I'm done. I don't want to be here anymore.

BRIAN
I will help you. I will save you from yourself.

STEPHEN
Enough Brian. I've had enough of your shit.

Brain gives stephen a long look up and down, lets out a deep breath, disappointed.

BRIAN
We're not leaving here until you've reach a realization.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

About yourself. About God and nature. These chains are not coming off. If you have to die out here then so be it. I will not let you go and you will thank me for it.

STEPHEN

You're insane.

BRIAN

You need to forget about yourself. Hand yourself over to nature. Love this tree. Love it with all your heart, it is your only means of salvation. You need to learn how to love. Love is the only thing worth anything in this life. You get one life Stephen, and you will learn how to love.

Stephen snaps, he rushes forwards to Brian. Stephen wraps both hands around Brian throat and strangles him.

Stephen knocks Brian to the ground and lands on top of him. The force of the attack causes Brian to drop his flick knife, it spills onto the ground and bounces out of reach.

Brian's face quickly turns purple. Stephen keeps both hands wrapped around Brian's neck. Stephen watches on as his own knuckles turn white, squeezing as hard as he can.

Brian's eyes begin to roll into the back of his head, he's dying. Stephen looks down at Brian, spit dribbles out of his mouth and down his chin.

Stephen could easily kill him here and now. All it would take is for him to keep up this pressure.

STEPHEN

You fucking bastard.

Stephen lets go. Brian coughs and gasps, desperately getting air back into his lungs. He was almost a goner. Stephen gets off of him, stands up.

Brian rolls over onto his side, brings his knees up, he's still coughing and choking, just glad to be able to breathe again.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I'm not a killer.

Stephen walks away, turns his back onto Brian who remains on the ground. Stephen hugs himself, lowers his head.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
I don't know what the fuck I am
anymore?

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Brian sits with his back against the base of the tree.
Another bottle of wine open, he drinks big gulps out of it.

Stephen sits and watches him, a stony face, still seething.
Brian smiles across at him, offers him some.

BRIAN
Have a drink with me?

STEPHEN
I almost killed you.

BRIAN
I don't think so.

STEPHEN
Your face turned purple.

BRIAN
I once held my breath for 14
minutes without even trying. And
I'm sure if I were to try and could
manage to hold it for much longer
than that even.

STEPHEN
You just talk bullshit.

Brian shakes the bottle at him.

BRIAN
Have a drink with me.

STEPHEN
This is madness. Can't you see it?
It's over. I failed the test. Let
me go home.

Brian gulps down some more.

BRIAN
I've got whiskey if you prefer. Or
maybe some more gin. It's good for
the soul to get drunk every once
and a while. He who makes a beast
of himself forgets the pain of
being a man.

STEPHEN
Fuck me, am I in pain right now.

BRIAN
I can see it.

STEPHEN
No, you can't.

Brian nods.

BRIAN
Your soul is lacking. Don't worry Stephen, I'll drag you kicking and screaming out through the other end of this. And you'll thank me for it. You'll get down on your hands and knees and you'll thank me. You will sing my name, I will become your saviour and you'll forever know it and be grateful.

STEPHEN
I think I might be having a nervous breakdown?

Brian holds out the bottle as far as his arm will stretch.

BRIAN
Have some. What other plans do you have today?

Stephen reluctantly shuffles over, snatches the wine bottle from Brian. He downs it, forces all of it down his throat. Empties out the bottle, once empty he throws it out into the tall grass.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Feel better?

Stephen holds out a hand.

STEPHEN
(wine spills out from the sides of his mouth)
More.

Brian bursts out into a fit of laughter, he finds another bottle of red and tosses it over to Stephen.

BRIAN
(singing)
'Come drink with me, come drink with me, lets fly, lets fly away.'

Stephen opens up this next bottle and continues in his chugging fashion. Determined to get absolutely off his face drunk.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Lit up by a full moon that seems to hang low right above them.

Stephen is completely off his face, he holds onto another almost empty bottle of wine as he staggers about stupidly, unable to properly control his arms or legs.

Brian watches him, laughs and cheers. He drums his hands against the ground.

BRIAN

Go, go, go. Dance Stephen, dance the night away. That's it. Move to your natural rhythms. Become one with God and the earth beneath your feet.

STEPHEN

Oh fuck. I think I'm going to be sick.

Brian continues to drum, Stephen is his jester. Brian is having the time of his life.

BRIAN

No. Keep going. You're a wonderful dancer. Keep going. One step forwards, two steps back.

Stephen tries to keep up his dance moves up, but getting his feet mixed up he falls flat onto his face, much to the delight of Brian.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Up, up, up. On your feet soldier. Up, get up.

Brian grabs onto Stephen, forces him to stand back up.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Come on, keep dancing, like a good boy. Dance for me.

Stephen gets back to dancing.

Brian claps.

STEPHEN

I think I'm going to be sick.

BRIAN

Drink more. Come on.

Brian lets go, Stephen staggers around some more before yet again falling hard onto the ground.

Brian laughs at him some more, finds another bottle of wine and forces some more down Stephen's throat before drinking some himself. They're both beyond wasted.

Stephen suddenly breaks out into a fit of laughter.

STEPHEN

This is so fucking stupid.

BRIAN

What's that?

STEPHEN

I can't believe I'm getting paid for this. Paid to do THIS.

Brian frowns, confused.

BRIAN

What do you mean?

STEPHEN

They said this would be so hard. They said they needed the best of us. Chose me. Trained me. Practised my speeches, how I was going to talk and even walk for hours and hours. Over months and months.

Brian watches Stephen suspiciously. His whole face changes.

BRIAN

(tense)

Who?

STEPHEN

Now I'm in the middle of nowhere, chained to a fucking tree.

(burps)

I've never drunk so much in my life. I can't even fucking see. I can't even feel my legs.

Brian steadies himself, a rage is building up.

BRIAN
What are you talking about?

STEPHEN
I need to go to sleep.

Stephen lays down on the ground, uses his hands like pillows he lays his head down onto them and closes his eyes.

Brian reaches down and shakes Stephen until his eyes reopen.

BRIAN
Tell me what you're talking about first. Be clear, say what your were trying to say.

STEPHEN
What?

BRIAN
(annoyed)
Out with it, finish what it was that you were saying. Go on.

Stephen shakes his head, confused.

STEPHEN
I'll feel better if I sleep. I just need sleep. That's all, nothing else.

BRIAN
Right you are, but tell me first and then you can sleep. Just let it out.

Stephen laughs to himself again.

STEPHEN
I'm a cop. This is supposed to be undercover work. But I haven't done anything and I haven't learnt anything. It's a fucking joke. All I've done is get drunk with you. How is that going to look in my report.

Brian laughs nervously.

BRIAN
(stunned)
You're lying. Jokes.

STEPHEN

I'm a police officer. They're paying me to be your friend. I'm so fucking drunk. My fucking head is spinning. I need to sleep. Paying me to be your friend, and you're one of the worst fucking people I've ever met.

Stephen once more gets comfortable on the ground and closes his eyes.

Brian backs away from Stephen, horrified. Brian's face changes, dark.

BRIAN

So, you tricked me.

Stephen passes out drunk. Brian staggers around the tree, he searches.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(muttering)

A fucking cop.

Brian circles around the tree, finally he finds something. A large, heavy rock. Jagged edges. Brian kneels down, frantically digs it up out of the ground with his bare hands.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(grunting)

Fucking pig bastard. May God forgive me for what must be done. Tricked. Fucking bastard. How could I be so stupid?

Brian frees the rock out from the ground, stands up with it in both hands. Takes all his strength to lift it.

Brian staggers over towards where Stephen lays in his drunken stupor. Brian, drunk himself finds it hard work to make it over to Stephen, hard to simply walk in a straight line.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(to Stephen)

You think you have me? Well, you don't. It's me who has you.

Brian returns to Stephen, stands over his head. Stephen, eyes closed, snores as he slips easily into a deep sleep.

Brian lifts the rock up as high as he can, his arms being to shake, unable to handle the weight of it for much longer.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Sayonara.

He lets go of the rock, it falls and lands square onto Stephen's face. Breaks his nose and knocks out a couple of Stephen's teeth. Makes a mess of his face but doesn't kill him.

Stephen coughs and spits, in total shock. He rolls over onto his side.

Brian wastes no time, grabs onto the rock again and lifts it up. He attempts the same, to simply drop it onto Stephen's head.

Stephen still on his side looks up, he sees Brian take aim. Brian drops the incredibly heavy rock down, Stephen manages to dodge out of the way just at the right moment.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(screaming)

You can't leave this place. You'll never defeat me. You'll never defeat God. Men like you, you'll never win!

Brian throws himself down on top of Stephen, wraps his hands around his throat and strangles him.

Stephen, though very drunk is still much stronger than Brian. Breaks free from his grip and punches Brian in the face.

STEPHEN

You fucking bastard.

Brian collapses backwards, Stephen now climbs on top of him, pins him down. Brian struggles, Stephen delivers another hard punch to Brian's face. Both men hurt and bleeding. Stephen's face is a cut up mess.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?

Groggy, Brian looks up at him.

BRIAN

I know what you are. I know who you are. You're here to destroy me. But I won't let you.

STEPHEN

What?

BRIAN

You're a fucking cop. A pig. Filth.
The enemy. Fuck you. You let it
slip, and now I know.

Brian spits up into Stephen's face. Stephen replies with a spit of his own, lots of blood, spatters all over Brian's face.

STEPHEN

Well, I know what the fuck you are
too. Terrorist. Scum. Murderer.

BRIAN

Fuck you. You know nothing.
Ignorant pig.

STEPHEN

You're being tracked, watched. For
a long time now. Every move you
make, it won't be long now before
they come for you.

BRIAN

Then kill me.

STEPHEN

I need you alive.

BRIAN

Fuck you.

STEPHEN

I don't get nothing for killing a
terrorist, I need to bring you in.
You're going to make me famous. I
bring you in alive, I'll be
promoted ten times over. They'll
have to give me whatever I want.

BRIAN

That's why you're doing this.
Pitiful. You have no honour.

STEPHEN

Pitiful? Me, look at you right now.
You're just a thing I'm using. A
career boost. That's it. A
terrorists who will rot in prison
as I'm lauded for my brilliance.
They'll call me a hero. And what do
you think they'll call you.

Stephen laughs at him.

Brian grits his teeth.

BRIAN

I'm no terrorist. Just a word you use to allow yourselves to freely torture and falsely imprison.

STEPHEN

You've burned down buildings with people inside. Planted bombs, threatened and bullied. Arson, drug trafficking, extortion. I could go on.

BRIAN

You missed out Blackmail, I even sent a few envelopes filled with my own shit to a few different Politian's. Pretty funny right? Oh yeah, you pigs never connected me to those vials of contaminated HIV blood that were sprayed at those animal testing scumbags. So called scientists, should have seen their faces when I splashed them and told them they've now contracted Aids. That made international news, no one came for me, but that was me too. I am protected, I have been chosen by God.

STEPHEN

You're proud of all the shit you've do?

Brian bares his bloodied teeth.

BRIAN

Yes.

STEPHEN

This counts as a confession.

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

It doesn't matter.

STEPHEN

Oh no?

BRIAN

You're not leaving here.

STEPHEN
Then neither are you.

BRIAN
I've already told you, I'm willing
to lay down my life and die here. I
am ready. Are you?

Both exhausted and drunk, they're at a stalemate.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Both Stephen and Brian are on opposite ends of the tree.
They're passed out asleep, both still chained to each other
and to the tree. They're stuck with one another.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Brian rolls over, his eyes slowly open to the sound of
Stephen crashing that same rock that Brian used to try and
kill him to bash the chains. Stephen's damaged the lock, but
not managed to break it open.

Brian sits up.

BRIAN
(calling out)
Hey, that's not going to work.
You're not going to break. Not like
that.

Stephen, tired, sweaty and hungover glances across at Brian,
takes a break.

STEPHEN
Go back to sleep.

BRIAN
You don't get to tell me what to
do. Now put the rock down.

Stephen drops the heavy rock, gesturing to it.

STEPHEN
Oh, you mean this rock that you
tried to kill me with?

Brian rubs his eyes with the back of his hand.

BRIAN
You didn't leave me much
alternative. You have to die here
now.

STEPHEN
(exhausted)
And how are you going to do it?

Brian shrugs.

BRIAN
(thinking)
I'm not sure.

STEPHEN
Just undo these chains. It's over.

BRIAN
I do that and you're gone.

STEPHEN
Yeah, that's the point.

BRIAN
I can't let that happen.

STEPHEN
You can't stay chained to me
forever.

BRIAN
No, I just need to out last you is
all.

STEPHEN
You have another key then?

BRIAN
No. Just the one.

STEPHEN
Then even if you out last me,
you'll still be stuck here.

BRIAN
There's still so much you don't
know. You don't understand, and yet
you still think you're so smart.

Stephen moves over to him, jabs a finger against his own
head.

STEPHEN

Then why don't you try and help me to understand?

BRIAN

We're not alone out here.

STEPHEN

What, but you said---

BRIAN

---I know what I said, but the truth is we're not alone.

STEPHEN

Bullshit. There's no one coming to chop down this fucking tree.

BRIAN

No. Others.

STEPHEN

Who?

BRIAN

I have members close by.

Stephen marches over towards Brian, kicks out at his legs and spits down at him.

STEPHEN

Then get me out of these fucking chains.

BRIAN

I can't do that.

STEPHEN

You could get members from your group here?

Brian nods, confidently.

BRIAN

Of course I could.
(clicks his fingers)
Just like that.

Stephen spits out at Brian, disgusted.

STEPHEN

They've known we were here all this time?

BRIAN

Yes. Of course. Maybe I hit you too hard on the head.

STEPHEN

Too hard? You were trying to kill me.

BRIAN

Touché.

Brian gathers up some dry leaves, twigs and sticks. He makes a small campfire in between them. A circle of small rocks. He removes a lighter from the back of his underpants and sets a fire.

Stephen can't help but laugh. Points at Brian's underpants.

STEPHEN

What the fuck are they, are they magic or something. What the hell else have you got back there?

BRIAN

I've been locked up in prisons all around the world, I know how to smuggle things.

STEPHEN

Gross.

The fire catches on and burns brightly.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You could have built us a fire this whole time?

BRIAN

You don't seem to understand the word 'test'.

STEPHEN

Fuck you.

Brian ignores him.

BRIAN

Bringing you out was all about testing you, to see the real you. And it worked. Your true self was revealed to me. A bitter disappointment, but the truth none the less.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

The truth isn't always what we want it to be, but when it's there, in front of you, you must learn to accept it.

STEPHEN

The nights we spent out here, we almost froze.

BRIAN

Don't exaggerate. You didn't even get even an ounce of frost bite.

STEPHEN

Jesus. All of this was for nothing.

Brian adds more sticks to the fire, it's slowly growing larger. Thick black smoke rises up high above them.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

JENNY SMITH, 19, skinny and pretty. KELLY FINLAY, 17, also beautiful with long blonde hair. And GEOFFREY JONES, 32, six foot five inches tall, shaped like an impressive bodybuilder.

They walk along together through the thick woods. All of them with their heads back, they look up at the billowing black smoke, and march towards it.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey walk into view, as they appear in front of the tree both Stephen and Brian smile, pleased to see them.

Stephen waves his hands above his head.

STEPHEN

(excited)

Over here, you've got to set me free. Over here! Please!

Brian stands, points an accusing finger at Stephen.

BRIAN

He's the filth. An undercover cop. Trying to trick me. Use me. Bring us all down.

STEPHEN

(nervous)

You're all in serious trouble, let me go before you have the murder of a police officer on you as well.

BRIAN

Listen to him, trying to talk his way out of the impossible.

Stephen yanks desperately on his chain.

STEPHEN

Set me free. I want to go home. Please. I have a wife. I have a son. Not even 12 months old. I just want to go home. Please. I don't belong here. Just let me go. Please. I'm begging you.

Jenny and Finlay go to Brian. They both take off the heavy backpacks that they carry.

Geoffrey comes over to Stephen, reaches out his massive hands towards him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

(warning)

I don't want to fight you.

Brian glances over.

BRIAN

(a knowing smile)

Don't worry, you won't.

Geoffrey grabs a hold of Stephen, uses his incredible strength he lifts him up, then pins him down to the ground.

Stephen tries to wriggle free, tries to free himself, but Geoffrey is just too big and powerful. Keeps Stephen pinned down onto the ground.

Stephen looks across at Brian and those two backpacks now in front of him. Brian opens them, from one he takes out a packet of sandwiches, crisps and biscuits. He eats these like a hungry pig.

Brian then takes out a bottle of water, opens it and gulps it down, though most of the water spills out down the front of him.

STEPHEN
(pleading)
Please, let me eat something too.

Brian burps, closes the backpack and signals for Jenny and Finlay to take them away. They do, without question. They pick them back up and sling them once again onto their backs.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Please. I haven't eaten for days.
At least some water. If you don't
give me something I'll die out
here.

BRIAN
I could get Geoffrey, that's his
name by the way, to crush your
windpipe if I wished it.

STEPHEN
Then why don't you?

Brian thinks about this, takes a moment. He shrugs.

BRIAN
(curious)
I don't think I'm done with you
yet.

STEPHEN
If you don't let me go, you're
killing me. You're all murderers.

Jenny and Finlay head back the way they came, disappearing into the thick overgrown trees. Geoffrey lets go of Stephen, stands up and follows them.

Stephen struggles up onto this feet. He tries to chase after them, but still chained to the tree he doesn't get very far. Tears roll down his face.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
(calling out in a rage)
Get back here. Let me go. Get back
here. Where are you going. Fuck
you. Get back here. Let me go!

Brian wipes his mouth clean with the back of his hand.

BRIAN
You really expect them to betray
me?

Stephen spins around to face him.

STEPHEN

Fuck you.

BRIAN

We are like a family. The whole group, we are a family. And I am the father. They are my children.

STEPHEN

Shut the fuck up. Please. God damn it.

BRIAN

They only listen to me, because together we are going to save mother earth from men like you, with the help of God, we will be the ones to save this earth of ours.

Stephen beats his hands against his chest.

STEPHEN

(angry)

I'm not trying to destroy the earth. I'm a cop who got given a job.

BRIAN

And I must do what it takes to save this planet of ours. You stand in the way. I will defeat you. Against me, men like you will never win.

STEPHEN

I'm chained to a fucking tree, slowly starving to death, how am I standing in your way?

Brian wags a finger at Stephen.

BRIAN

You are the enemy. You wish to stop me from achieving my goal. The earth is dying. The world is coming to an end. Mankind is destroying it's own God created home. I need you to understand this?

STEPHEN

(desperate)

I do understand?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

(sad)

I wish you did.

STEPHEN

I promise you I do. I understand what you're trying to do. And why you're doing it. I understand it all.

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

You'll say anything.

STEPHEN

(snarls)

You said you could have gotten that freak to kill me, so why didn't you?

BRIAN

There was a moment that I thought I could trust you. And then you told me you're a cop. Breaking my heart. But there was still a moment. Maybe we can get back to that moment again.

STEPHEN

Then just tell me what you want?

BRIAN

Become one of us.

STEPHEN

OK.

BRIAN

Or die.

STEPHEN

Fine. I'm one of you.

BRIAN

No. You're not.

Stephen breaks down, crying.

STEPHEN

I'm going to die out here. You're going to kill me.

BRIAN
I need you to free your mind.

STEPHEN
Fine.

BRIAN
It's not that easy.

STEPHEN
I promise I'll do whatever you want me to.

BRIAN
I'm not convinced.

STEPHEN
Get those people back here and give me something to eat. I can't last much longer. I need water if nothing else.

BRIAN
No.

Stephen marches over to Brian, attacks him. Two days without food or water has left Stephen weak. Brian, fed and watered easily shoves Stephen away, trips him up and sends Stephen face first down into the ground.

STEPHEN
What do you want from me?

BRIAN
(yelling)
To free yourself. Let go, become free Stephen. I want you to evolve. I want to see it with my own eyes.

STEPHEN
Fine. Tell me how?

BRIAN
No. You need to work that out yourself.

STEPHEN
Jesus Christ, I just want to go home.

Stephen again tries to attack Brian in a rage, only for Brian to easily knock him away and throws him back to the ground. It's a total mismatch between them now.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen has built his own campfire, a circle of rocks he gathers up lots of dry twigs, leaves and sticks. Stephen then looks over at Brian.

STEPHEN
(clicking his fingers)
The lighter. Give it to me.

BRIAN
No.

STEPHEN
I want a fire. Give me the lighter.

BRIAN
You really need to focus your
energies on freeing your mind.
Showing me that you can become one
of us.

STEPHEN
Give it to me. Or I'll get up and
simply take it from you.

Brian laughs at him, dismissive.

BRIAN
You've already tried fighting me.
Twice. How did that go?

STEPHEN
Give it to me.

BRIAN
Forget about it.

STEPHEN
I want a fire.

BRIAN
What a disappointment you are.

STEPHEN
Hand it over.

Brian reluctantly takes out the lighter again from the back of his underpants. Shows it to Stephen.

BRIAN
This? This is what you want?

Stephen holds out both his hands.

STEPHEN

I'm going to bring them back here.
I need something to eat and
something to drink. I need to bring
them back.

Brian throws the lighter out towards the trees. Throws it as far away from them as he can.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

(crushed)

No!

Stephen tries to go after it, but the chain won't let him. He spins around to Brian.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You idiot, what the fuck did you do
that for?

BRIAN

It's gone now. Every time you
become obsessed with something that
isn't this tree, I will get rid of
it. I'm helping you. And I don't
care if you don't see it.

Stephen returns to his made campfire, he grabs two sticks and rubs them together, he tries to create a fire, but clearly has no idea for how it's done.

Brian watches him, laughs at him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

STEPHEN

Shut the fuck up.

BRIAN

Can't you see you're just wasting
your time. And what little energy
you have left.

STEPHEN

I can't die out here. Like this.
Tied to a fucking tree. I won't
have my family finding me like
this.

BRIAN

You're the one who went undercover.

STEPHEN

Yeah, and don't you think I fucking regret it now?

BRIAN

Don't feel too bad. You almost had me. Impressive you got this far.

STEPHEN

Good for my fucking career. Shoot me up the fucking ladder. I knew what you were. But I didn't think you'd kill me.

BRIAN

I'm not killing you, you're killing yourself. Just like the rest of the world. Humanity is racing into it's own extinction because you refuses to see the bigger picture.

STEPHEN

(talking to himself)

I thought this would be easy. In and out. Just a bunch of dumb hippies. I thought this was going to be so fucking easy.

BRIAN

It almost was. You manipulated me with ease. Have you ever thought that you might be a sociopath?

Stephen scoffs. Looks over at Brian.

STEPHEN

Says you.

BRIAN

A spy for an evil government. That just wants to see me locked up forever. And you still protest that you're not standing in my way. That you're not my enemy and that you don't need a spiritual awakening? I have caught a snake that was trying to kill me. And you want me to simply release that snake back out into the wild?

Stephen punches down at the ground, his frustrations boiling over.

STEPHEN

I thought I'd be like James Bond. Pretend to be someone I'm not. Get the job done. Be called a hero. Get treated as a hero. But it's going to end here with me tied to fucking a tree. That's not a very James Bond ending is it?

Brian stands up, walks over to Stephen.

BRIAN

Stop this.

Brian kicks the sticks out of his hand. Kicks hard at Stephen's fingers, cracks them. Brian reaches down, picks up a handful of dry leaves and rubs them cruelly into Stephen's face.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Stop it.

Stephen slaps the leaves away.

STEPHEN

What is it that you want from me, what?

Brian kicks out at Stephen's head. Connects hard. Knocks Stephen out cold.

BRIAN

Enough talking.

Brian stands over the top of the unconscious Stephen, hands on his hips, stares down at him.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen slowly comes back around, he wakes up. Touches a couple of fingers to the side of his head, feels the cut from where Brian kicked him.

Stephen looks over and sees Brian squatting over the 'toilet', the hole in the ground.

STEPHEN

What are you doing?

BRIAN

What does it look like? Putting it plainly, taking a shit.

Stephen stares at him. Finished, Brian uses a couple green leaves to wipe with then pulls his underpants back up.

Brian now watches Stephen still staring at him, unblinking.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

What?

STEPHEN

I've had nothing to eat, nothing to drink.

Brian rolls his eyes.

BRIAN

Sing me a different tune.

STEPHEN

I'm wasting away.

BRIAN

You need to focus on your soul and your mind. Forget your physical self. Why is this so hard for you?

STEPHEN

My stomach is in agony. You have no idea how this feels.

BRIAN

Is this really how you want to spend your time with me? What happened to trying to impress me. Because right now, there's nothing impressive about what you're doing.

STEPHEN

You're under surveillance. I can help you. I know what's been bugged. There's other undercover officers. I could give you there names. Fuck, I could even tell you where they live.

BRIAN

Anything to save your own skin?

STEPHEN

(emotional)

I need to get home. I have a child. My son needs to know his father.

BRIAN

And I have three billion children,
all need saving.

STEPHEN

I have a real family.

BRIAN

So do I.

STEPHEN

No, you have a cult.

BRIAN

Sticks and stones will break my
bones but words will never hurt me.

STEPHEN

You're an insane cult leader. I'm a
real father. A husband. A real
person.

BRIAN

A cult you were desperate to join
not so long ago if I remember
correctly?

STEPHEN

It was just a job.

BRIAN

Well, someone pretty powerful must
think I'm worth the time.

STEPHEN

You want names? I'll give them to
you.

Brian goes over to his bag of booze, pulls out another bottle
of wine. Opening it he drinks.

BRIAN

I'm not interested.

STEPHEN

You're under 24 hour watch. James
Bowen. Alex Dawson. Simon Stone.
Kevin Kalinski. Look them up.

Brian takes a few more big gulps.

BRIAN

I'm not interested I'm afraid.

Brian comes over and places the bottle down next to Stephen.

STEPHEN
You're a drunk. A piss head. An
addict.

BRIAN
Drink with me.

STEPHEN
I haven't eaten in days.

BRIAN
(smiling)
Drink with me.

Stephen picks the bottle up, he slings it at Brian's head, only just missing him. The bottle smashes up against the tree.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
If you wish it, I could have you
killed right here and now?

Stephen rolls over onto his stomach and simply breaks down, sobbing.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Do not waste good wine. It is a sin
that will be punished in the after
life.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Both men still chained to the tree. On opposite sides of it. Stephen lays on his back, his stomach loudly grumbling, his lips dry and cracked. He stares dazed up at the moon.

Brian gulps down what's left in one bottle of wine before grabbing another. Brian stares off into the distance, muttering silently to himself. Still drinking, silence between the two of them.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - NIGHT

Brian is now passed out, drunk. Two empty wine bottles beside him. He snores.

Stephen, he looks even worse. Takes a lot of effort to roll over onto his side.

STEPHEN

Brian. Let me have a drink.

Brian continues to snore. Stephen calls out, his throat sore.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Brian. Are you awake?

No answer. Stephen grunts and moans as he now sits up, then forces himself up onto his knees.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Let me have something to drink.

Stephen smacks his dry lips together.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I need something. I'm afraid if I fall asleep now I won't wake up.

Brian is dead to the world. Stephen attempts to stand, but with his legs weak and shaking it's an idea that he soon gives up on.

Stephen now crawls towards Brian, like a baby who hasn't yet learnt to walk.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Brian, give me something you fucking disgusting drunk.

Stephen reaches him, punches Brian in the chest. Still Brian is unmoved, his snoring only seems to get both deeper and louder.

Stephen picks up one of those open wine bottles. He pours what little remains in it directly into his open mouth.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ I'm so thirsty.

Stephen looks around, something catches his eye. He crawls around Brian's body and inspects the broken bottle, the one he himself threw at the tree and broke.

He picks up a large shard of glass, holds it ready out in front of him.

He contemplates, slashes it out in front of him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You have no idea how fucked you are.

Stephen now positions himself at Brian's head, he holds the shard of glass to the side of Brian's neck, close to his main vein.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I never thought I'd want to kill someone as much as I want to kill you right now. I never thought I'd be able to do it. I'd rather be a vegetarian than hunt for my own food. But you deserve to die. The world would be better if you were dead.

Stephen applies a little pressure, the tip of the glass easily breaks through Brian's skin, cutting him, blood oozing out.

Stephen pulls back.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You've turned me into an animal. I could kill you if I wanted to.

Stephen yanks on the chain that keeps him locked to the tree.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

All I want is to go home. I love my wife. I love my son. I'll do anything to see them again. I had such a shit childhood. My father left before I was even born. I promised to always be there for my son. I need to go home.

Stephen throws the shard of glass away, it bounces and falls into the hole that Brian had dug out to act as their toilet. The shard of glass falls inside it and makes a sloshy plop sound. Stephen furrows his brow.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You ate the fucking key didn't you? And then you kept of eating and eating. Like a fucking pig.

Stephen crawls over to the makeshift toilet. He peers down inside it. Human waste, urine and faeces.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ. What the fuck have you reduced me to?

Stephen, gagging, tears streaming down his face reaches into the hole, digs through the faeces with his bare hands. Breaks apart the piles of human waste. Searching.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Fucking hell. Fucking shit. What
the fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck!

He finds the key that Brian had swallowed. He holds it out in front of him, even gives a brief smile.

His hands covered in pieces of shit. Stephen rolls away from the hole, wipes his hands as clean as he can on the grass. The smell is all too much and Stephen is sick. Nothing in his empty stomach, only a small amount of bile comes out.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen uses the key to unlock the chain wrapped around his waist. He's free. Stephen throws the chains off of him, smiling happy he's able to stand.

STEPHEN
I'm free.

Stephen staggers over to Brian, stands over the top of him. Kicks dirt right into Brian's face. Does this over and over and doesn't stop until he stirs and wakes up.

BRIAN
What is the meaning of this, stop
it. Stop it right now.

Stephen grins victoriously.

STEPHEN
You don't get to tell me what to
do.

BRIAN
Who do you think you are?

Stephen staggers back away from Brian, holds his arms out and does a twirl.

STEPHEN
What does it look like?

Brian needs a moment, studies Stephen, looks him up and down.

BRIAN
What have you done?

STEPHEN

I'm done. See you around Brian. See you in the next life.

Brian gets up onto his feet.

BRIAN

You're not leaving this place.

STEPHEN

That's where you're wrong.

Brian, furious leaps towards Stephen, both hands outstretched in front of him. Trying desperately to grab onto him.

Stephen shuffles quickly backwards, gets just far back enough where he's out of reach from Brian.

Brian still tries in vain to grab onto Stephen, his fingertips almost touching him.

BRIAN

You will die here.

STEPHEN

Enjoy your chains.

BRIAN

And where will you go now, back to your pig friends? And tell them what?

STEPHEN

I have enough to bury you.

BRIAN

You gave me their names. Offering their lives to save your own. What will they think of you when they find that out?

STEPHEN

I'm not the only one to make confessions. They'll be more interested in yours.

BRIAN

You can't win. You don't have it in you to beat someone like me. You're not smart enough. You're a failure. I was offering to free your very soul. Now you will achieve nothing with your miserable life.

STEPHEN

I know what you have done. With what I know, with what you freely told me, it's over for you.

Brian wriggles and jerks himself forwards, trying to break free but the chain keeps him in place.

BRIAN

You will stay here or I'll have you killed. Chain yourself back to that tree before it's too late.

STEPHEN

You're insane. You've already tried to kill me.

BRIAN

I've been trying to save you.

STEPHEN

Do you have any idea how close you've come to death?

BRIAN

And yet I'm still here.

STEPHEN

So am I.

Stephen turns his back onto Brian and staggers away from him. His legs exhausted, his feet heavy. Still no food or water he has very little energy but knows he must get away.

BRIAN

(screaming)

Get back here now! You'll never escape. Never!

STEPHEN

I'm going home.

BRIAN

Do you even know where you are. You can't hope to survive out there without me.

STEPHEN

I have to try.

Stephen pushes through the overgrown trees and grass. Slowly disappearing from Brian's view.

BRIAN
Get back here!

Stephen disappears into the woods.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I'll fucking kill you!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Stephen continues to stagger randomly through the woods, no clear direction. Just keeps going. His legs like jelly, his feet like they're trapped in slabs of concrete.

He comes across a bush covered in bright blue berries. With wide eyes and his mouth watering he throws himself at them.

STEPHEN
Please don't be poisonous. Please
don't be poisonous. I'm so fucking
hungry.

He grabs one, chews it up, tastes it. Swallows. He then waits.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
OK. Yes. Alright. Not blueberries,
but OK. Tastes OK.

Stephen grabs a couple more, thick and juicy. The dark juice runs down his chin. Wetting his dry and cracked lips.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Yes. Oh God yes. Thank you, thank
you, thank you.

He now dives head first into it, grabbing fistfuls of the berries and shovelling them into his open, grateful mouth.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Oh my god they're so good. So
sweet.

He chomps down, an all you can eat berry buffet.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Brian, still chained to the tree has a fresh fire burning beside him. He pulls and yanks on the chain that keeps him trapped.

He looks out all around him, yelling and screaming. Acting like a wild animal. The sounds he makes aren't human. Like an injured wolf.

Black smoke billows out and blows around him. Brian is out of control, hurting himself as he tries to break free.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Stephen continues to stagger through the woods, but with both hands to his stomach he's in agony. His stomach is grumbling loudly.

STEPHEN
Jesus fucking Christ. My stomach.
It hurts too much. Fucking hell.
What have I done?

Stephen collapse down onto his knees. His stomach grumbling louder, his face twists up from the incredible pain he's feeling all over.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
What the fuck, my stomach, it's on
fire.

He finally collapses down onto his side, shivering. He curls up into a ball. Calling out, desperate.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Help me. Someone. Is there anyone
out there. Help me.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey sprint over towards Brian, each of them carrying another backpack.

Brian still thrashes himself around, trying to break out of the chains.

His team drop down their backpacks. Opening them up and showing the fresh supplies of food and water that they've brought with them.

BRIAN
No supplies. Hunt that cop down.
Hunt him down. Bring him back here.

The three share a look between each other, unsure.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

The pig. The scum. I want him back here. Alive. Find him. Catch him. But do not hurt him. Right here. This place. This is where he needs to face judgement. Find him! Bring him back!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Stephen is still on the ground, still crippled with the pain in his stomach. He hears the sound of approaching footsteps crackling and rustling through the trees.

STEPHEN

Help me. Is someone there. Help me. I need help.

Stephen forces himself to roll over, pushes himself up onto his knees. Red in the face, he's in terrible pain.

Stephen sees Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey jogging towards him. His face falls, recognising who they are.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

No, this isn't fair.

Stephen grunts and groans as he gets up onto his feet. He tries to run away, to flee. But Brian's three goons spot him and easily chase him down. Grabbing a hold of Stephen they wrestle him to the ground.

Stephen tries to resist against them, but it's three against one and in his current state he doesn't stand a chance.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

No. This isn't fair. No. Let me go. No!

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Brian, now free from the tree watches as Stephen is returned to him, carried by Geoffrey over his shoulder.

Stephen is thrown down at Brian's feet. Brian holds onto the chain, the other end still wrapped around the base of the tree.

BRIAN

All of that, and look where you are. Back at my feet.

STEPHEN
Just let me go, please.

BRIAN
Let you go? No, this is where you
belong.

STEPHEN
What are you going to do to me?

Brian wraps the other end of the chain once again around
Stephen's waist.

BRIAN
I'm going to return you to how you
were.

Stephen just has no energy left, he's a broken mess. His body
is simply shutting down. As the chain is once again wrapped
around his waist, he breaks down crying.

STEPHEN
(whimpering)
Oh god. No. Please. This isn't
right. Please, don't do this. I'm
begging you.

BRIAN
You won't be allowed to leave this
time.

Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey gather behind Brian. Stephen is
once more chained to the tree, though he remains on the
ground, seemingly unable to move. Even if he wanted to, he
can't.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen is now sat up, rests his back against the base of the
tree, still lacking any energy, he's breathing heavy. He
holds onto the chain around his waist, but nothing he can do
about it.

Brian walks around the tree, free from the chain, he keeps a
close eye on Stephen, not trusting him.

BRIAN
I tried ever so hard with you.

STEPHEN
I can't move.

BRIAN
Fate brought us together.

STEPHEN
I need a doctor.

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN
You don't. You're right where you
need to be.

STEPHEN
Jesus Christ, look at me.

BRIAN
I see you. And I see you for who
you are. You need to free your
mind. Everything else will follow.

STEPHEN
Not this shit again.

BRIAN
I'm trying to help you. Like how I
try and help so many others.

STEPHEN
How can you think you're anything
but evil?

Brian laughs at this.

BRIAN
On the contrary. I am a pure
hearted man. Your heart on the
other hand, it is filled with hate.

STEPHEN
Just let me go.

BRIAN
I can't. Fate brought you into my
life. We both have to see this out
until the very end.

STEPHEN
No.

BRIAN
It's just the two of us now.

STEPHEN
I don't want to die here.

BRIAN

Then you better wake up.

STEPHEN

You can stop this. You don't have to do this to me. You can save my life.

BRIAN

The whole planet is dying. What makes you so special that you think I should care so much about your life and what happens to it above all others on this earth? I'm trying to save the world, the whole world, you're trying to put a stop to me. Me and you, opposites. On different ends of the scale. Our two lives, they cannot coalesce.

Stephen closes his eyes tightly shut, offering up a silent prayer.

STEPHEN

I want to go home.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

Stephen is too weak, he's barely able to keep his eyes open. He watches on as Brian digs out a large whole at the base of the tree with help from Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey.

All of them silently digging. It's hard work. But they've got plenty of food and water that they share happily amongst each other. Digging away, they're going about their work at a fast pace.

Stephen's mouth is now so dry he's barely able to talk.

STEPHEN

Water.

He's ignored.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Water.

Brian hears him. The other three don't react.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Water.

Brian places down his shovel. Comes away from the whole and stands over Stephen.

Stephen looks up at Brian.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
(pleading)
Water.

Brian gulps down a large bottle of water until there's nothing left. He then unzips his pants, urinating onto Stephen. Right onto Stephen's face, and chest.

Stephen shuts his eyes and weakly turns his head away from Brian, humiliated.

EXT. WOODS - ANCIENT TREE - DAY

The hole is dug, wide and deep. Finlay, Jenny and Geoffrey each grab a hold of Stephen and drag him over to the hole. They then shove him inside it. Stephen is barely awake, it's hard just to keep breathing.

Brian, hands in his pockets stands over the hole, looking down at Stephen resting inside it.

BRIAN
You must become one with nature
Stephen. This is something that
I've been trying to teach you. But
I think you must experience it, for
you to truly understand what it
means.

Brian now gives a signal to his team of three, and still holding onto their shovels they begin to move the dug out soil back into the hole with Stephen still inside. Covering Stephen up.

Stephen groans, attempts to spit, but can't. He tries to speak, but can't. The soil continues to rain down onto him.

Brian watches this, without much of an expression.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I'm jealous of you Stephen.

Stephen is almost completely covered in dirt now.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
You'll get to be with this tree
forever and forever. You're a very
lucky man.

Stephen tries to fight back, but impossible. He's then completely covered over with soil. Brian again grabs onto his shovel. He joins in with the others, making sure that this dug out hole is completely filled.

Brian looks amongst his friends.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Let's sing a song?

Jenny, Finlay and Geoffrey all smile happily back at him, nodding their heads.

Brian clears his throat and starts to belt out a happy sounding song. All the while they're all still moving and scattering soil into and over the hole. Not stopping until it's completely filled back up.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END