

FEAR ITSELF:

Skin & Bones

by

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FEAR ITSELF/"Skin & Bones"

TEASER

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - DAY

It's cold. Very cold. All the mountains in the area are wrapped in storm clouds.

From here, we can see most of the surrounding Colorado countryside, including the spectacular peaks of the Sangre De Cristo mountains and the slopes of the Culebra mountains.

A MAIN HOUSE, with a huge porch that wraps around three sides of the building. A wide RANCH YARD with a BARN off to one side and a COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE at the far end.

It's cold enough outside to see your breath. Cold enough that it's hard to breathe. Even so, two people stand on the front porch, about as far apart as they can be while still sharing the same porch.

DEREK EDLUND. 17 years old, a tough kid. The weight of the world on his shoulders.

TIM EDLUND, his brother, just two years younger, but a child in most ways. Developmentally challenged. There's an open, trusting innocence to Tim.

They've been outside for a while. They're both freezing.

The door to the house opens and their uncle, ROWDY EDLUND, steps out.

Late-30s. Everything about him is rough-hewn, weathered. Eyes wind-burnt into a permanent squint. Skin tanned to leather.

One leg is in a cast. Almost all the way up to the hip. Rowdy's surprisingly mobile, but it definitely slows him down, and he walks with a THUNK! on every other step.

ROWDY

What are you doing? Get inside.

Neither of them budge. Rowdy grabs Tim by the arm, starts to pull him away.

DEREK

Get your hands off him.

Rowdy stops, glares down at Derek.

ROWDY
Inside. Now.

DEREK
You can't tell us what to do. This ain't your ranch.

ROWDY
I can, and I am.

DEREK
You ain't our daddy. You just work for him, Uncle Rowdy.

ROWDY
Don't have a thing to do with it. Wanna make yourselves sick so your momma's got more to worry about?

TIM
Where's our dad?

ROWDY
I don't know, Tim.

DEREK
If you cared, you'd be out there.

ROWDY
Out where? Marching around the mountains in the middle of a storm with no idea at all where to look? I wanna find him. But I can't just go charging out there blind.

DEREK
Well, in this weather, the sheriff ain't looking, either, so you tell me what is being done. I heard a long list of what ain't.

Derek takes Tim by the arm and Rowdy lets him go.

DEREK
(to Tim)
Come on. Let's go.

Derek leads Tim inside, leaves Rowdy there on the porch.

Rowdy looks out at the desolate mountains, realizing what he must do.

INT. ROWDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rowdy bundles up, getting dressed for the cold. He glances over at a photo on his dresser.

GRADY, his wife, and his two sons in happier days. In the picture, Grady is just north of 40 years old, thick around the middle from a cushy corporate gig but with a face that has the peculiar tightness of expensive plastic surgery.

There's a soft knock on Rowdy's door, and ELENA EDLUND steps in. Grady's wife from the picture.

Late 30s. Striking, but she dresses down to de-emphasize how good looking she is. Understated in every way. She's got an easy smile, but sad eyes.

ROWDY

Your son just put me on notice.
Looks like I'm heading out there.

ELENA

Storm's bad.

He can see how scared she is. He puts his hand on her shoulder, but even that little bit of physical contact between them is too much, too intimate. He backs off, puts on a forced smile.

ROWDY

Been bad for days. That's the problem. Grady's got half our herd with him. He may own this land, but he doesn't spend the time here that I do. He's not a rider.

ELENA

You mean he's not a rider like you?
(gestures at Rowdy's leg)

ROWDY

Your husband's late. More than a week late.

(beat)

When we were little, me and him used to play cowboy all the time. He thinks that just cause he owns this spread, he's a real cowboy. But he ain't. I am. Grady's still just playin'. And in these parts that'll get you killed.

ELENA

I know. I'm worried. But part of me thinks that... GRADY!

ROWDY

Thinks that Grady's what?

ELENA

No... he's there!

She points out the window. Rowdy turns and looks and sees a figure staggering across the ranch yard, moving slowly.

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - DAY

Rowdy piles out of the house as fast as he can with the cast. Elena follows him out onto the porch.

ROWDY

Stay here.

Rowdy heads out across the yard. Grady marches along, towards the house, slow but steady, staring straight ahead. He doesn't seem to see Rowdy, even when he gets close.

Grady's pale, gaunt. Rowdy can't help but notice DRY BLOOD smeared on his chin and neck. Rowdy reaches out and touches his arm, and Grady finally reacts.

He flinches away, looks Rowdy in the eye, and opens his mouth to scream. What comes out, though, is ragged, strangled.

ROWDY

Grady! It's me! It's Rowdy!

Grady struggles to get away from him for a moment, but Rowdy holds on, and after a moment, Grady seems to focus, suddenly seeing his brother. Grady collapses, exhausted.

Derek and Tim step out onto the porch, see what's going on. Elena tries to stop them from running out to their father. She manages to grab Tim, but Derek heads down the steps.

Rowdy looks down at Grady with his eyes rolled back in his head, mouth open, tongue split and black. Derek runs up, sees his father and stops cold.

DEREK

What the hell happened to him?

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Rowdy and Elena stand side-by-side in the hallway outside Grady's bedroom.

Down the hall, Derek and Tim sit at the top of the stairs, far enough away that Rowdy and Elena can't hear them as they speak to each other in low, hushed tones.

TIM

Dad's okay, right?

DEREK

Don't be stupid, stupid. Doc's been in there an hour.

Tim tries not to cry, turns away so that Derek can't see him. Derek's frustrated with his brother, but he tries to hold back his temper.

DEREK

I know you don't understand the way things are. Ain't your fault. But this is serious, Tim. You gotta be ready for whatever happens. Might not be good.

TIM

Is he... is he gonna die?

Derek watches as Rowdy puts his arm around Elena and pulls her close so she can cry on his shoulder. Doesn't like that one little bit.

DEREK

I don't know.

The bedroom door opens and DOC MORGAN steps out. Little man in his 60s. Looks like he was woken up to come up here, and like he can't believe what he saw.

Derek cranes his head so he can see past Doc Morgan.

Grady lies on his own bed. The sheet's thrown back so Tim can see most of Grady's body. Thin enough to see his ribs under the too-white skin.

As Derek stares, Grady suddenly turns his head, so he can look all the way down the hall, directly at his son.

Derek jerks back, as if burnt, as Doc Morgan closes the door.

ROWDY

How is he?

DOC MORGAN

Alive. Which seems like a small miracle, if you ask me. How long did you say he was missing?

ROWDY

Ten days.

DOC MORGAN

And he's the only one who came back?

ROWDY

Right.

(beat)

How do you suppose he survived all this time?

DOC MORGAN

He must have found something to eat out there. What I have no idea.

ELENA

Doc... will he be okay?

DOC MORGAN

I don't see why not. As long as you keep him hydrated and let him rest. He should come back around to his old self in no time.

Elena seems relieved, barely able to believe the news.

ELENA

Did he say anything?

DOC MORGAN

Yes he did. He said he's hungry.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elena finishes up the soup she's cooking. Sets a plate, with soft fresh-baked bread and butter on the side, then dishes up the soup. Puts it on a tray.

And the whole time, she's brushing off tears.

Rowdy walks in, pushing Derek in front of him.

ROWDY

Here you go, Mom. Derek would love to carry that tray up to his dad.

ELENA

Is that so?

Rowdy puts his hand on Derek's shoulder. Just that pressure is enough to make Derek wince.

DEREK

Yes, mom, I'd love to.

ROWDY

Look at that.

Derek takes the tray from his mother and heads upstairs.

Once he's gone, Elena steps into Rowdy's embrace, buries her face in his chest, and just lets go: all the tears, all the tension, everything out at once.

ELENA

Doesn't even look like himself.
His eyes. Something's not right.
It's like he's... somebody else.

ROWDY

He's just been through a lot.
That's all.

ELENA

God, if he wasn't so fragile right now, I'd go up there and I'd strangle the life out of him.

ROWDY

However mad you are, just remember... he's paying for it. And I'm probably just as mad at him as you are... but until he's up and around, all that has to be back-burnered.

There's a loud THUMP and a CRASH from upstairs.

DEREK

(upstairs)
Dammit!

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elena steps into the room. Derek kneels on the floor, trying to clean up the soup his mother made, the entire tray spilled. Grady lies in bed, unmoving.

ELENA
What did you do?

DEREK
I didn't. He did.

ELENA
Your father's very sick. You have to help with these things. You can't just...

Derek stands up, immediately furious.

DEREK
He knocked the tray out of my hand!
On purpose!

He pushes past her so he can storm out. She grabs for him, but Derek sidesteps her and leaves.

She turns back to look at Grady, who still hasn't moved. His eyes aren't even open. In fact, until she gets closer, she can't even see his chest moving, and he looks dead.

She feels his forehead. Feels his cheeks. She's disturbed by the texture of his skin, by his color.

She reaches past him to adjust his pillow.

His eyes flutter slightly, open just a bit. Grady sniffs the air, once, twice.

She doesn't notice that his eyes are open.

He opens his mouth, very slightly. His awful black tongue pokes out, like an independent living thing --

-- and he licks the underside of her arm!

She flinches away, instantly crept out, and takes a step back from the edge of the bed.

ELENA
G-Grady? Baby, are you awake?

GRADY
... you...

He's so soft that Elena instinctively steps closer again, leaning in close so she can hear him.

ELENA

What is it? What can I get you?

GRADY

... taste good...

She shudders, but Grady's eyes are already closed again. He's either asleep or too worn out to keep the eyes open.

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - NIGHT

Someone walks across the yard of the ranch, bundled up. Huge, imposing, moving with purpose.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

A heavy knock on the front door.

Derek and Tim appear at the top of the stairs. Rowdy pushes past them, checking his watch.

He stomps down the steps, leg hurting him with each step. He pauses before he opens the door, looks back up the stairs.

ROWDY

You two. Go to bed.

He waits until they duck back out of sight, then opens the door. The figure we saw in the yard stands in the doorway, filling it almost completely.

Rowdy takes a step back, and EDDIE BEAR steps in. A huge slab of a guy, older, in his 60s, but in incredible shape.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Eddie follows Rowdy down this dark hall.

ROWDY

If I hadn't broken my damn leg, he never would have volunteered to handle the cattle drive. What does he know about cattle? He may own this place, but he never actually visits. You know how hard it can be in the mountains. And he goes out *playing* cowboy like a jerk.

At the end of the hall, Rowdy opens the door, stopping to let Eddie walk past him.

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elena sits in a chair in the furthest corner of the room from her husband. Shawl in her lap, knitting in her hands. Asleep, exhausted, passed out at this point.

Grady's wide awake. Eyes open. Unmoving in his bed.

Eddie stands on the threshold of the room. Looks in at Elena. Looks in at Grady. Grady's eyes roll around and fix on Eddie. When he moves, Grady's eyes follow. Locked on.

Eddie walks across the room to where Elena is asleep, and he puts one hand gently on her shoulder.

She jerks back from Eddie's hand, then realizes where she is.

EDDIE

How is he?

ELENA

He won't eat. Can you help him?

EDDIE

Hope so.

They both look over at Grady. His eyes still locked on Eddie Bear. With his mouth hanging open, thick ropy drool on his cheek, it almost looks like Grady's smiling.

EDDIE

Do me a favor. Wait downstairs.

He doesn't offer any explanation. Rowdy helps Elena up. Eddie waits for both of them to leave, waits for the door to close. Only then does he turn to look at Grady again.

Grady stares back at him. Ready.

EDDIE

What do you got t'say for yourself?

Grady's voice is much stronger than it was when he was trying to talk to his wife. Firm. Surprisingly solid.

GRADY

You're scared.

EDDIE

Maybe. Should I be?

He walks closer to Grady's bed. Grady doesn't answer. Just watches him, and now he really does seem to be smiling. But it's a flat, mirthless smile, almost a twitch.

Eddie looks down at Grady. He can see how every vein shows through his almost translucent skin, how he seems to be drying out.

EDDIE

When I was a boy... six years old or so... my family lived on the res... and one of my uncles, he got lost in the mountains during a flash snowfall. They sent out a search party or two, but a missing Indian wan't no big thing to the sheriff's office. Just wrote him off. When he did show up, it was weeks gone by. He didn't look right. Not at all.

GRADY

How did he look?

EDDIE

He looked... like you.

GRADY

You don't look much different yourself, Eddie Bear. At least tonight you managed to walk inside the room. That night in 1942, you stood outside the door. Nobody could get you to step one foot inside. Afraid.

EDDIE

Yeah, well... I was a kid.

GRADY

You look just the same right now.

EDDIE

I ain't scared of you no more.

Grady sits up. One motion. His legs flung around off the side of the bed, sitting inches from Eddie. To Eddie's great credit, he doesn't move.

GRADY

You were.

Grady pushes himself into a stand.

GRADY

You will be.

And now, standing, it's obvious that something's gone even more wrong. Grady's thinner. His fingers longer. And pale.

Eddie reaches down to his belt, and quickly slides his knife out of its sheath.

He holds it down, by his side, so Grady can see it. This is one big-ass knife. This is a knife you use if you feel like fighting a bear. Eddie doesn't even gesture with it.

EDDIE

How 'bout you sit yourself back down? Two of us keep talking. Cause that's all this is right now... two of us talking.

Grady stands there for a moment, swaying a bit. Just long enough to let Eddie know that he's thinking about it.

Then sits back down.

EDDIE

Glad to see you're feeling better.

GRADY

Oh, I'll bet you are.

EDDIE

If you're feeling well enough to get out of bed, then you won't mind when I tell Rowdy that I quit. You'll get along fine without me.

GRADY

You a quitter, Eddie?

EDDIE

I'm old as hell. That ain't no accident. I'll quit. I'll run. I'll tuck tail. Whatever you call it. But if you are what I think you are... I don't want to be here.

GRADY

Then go. You're just a broken-down drunken no-account injun, anyway. Ain't like you're gonna be missed.

Eddie backs away. Finally tucks the knife back into the sheath around the time he reaches the door.

EDDIE

You're gonna have to eat.

Grady lays back into his bed, settles in.

GRADY

Soon.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Rowdy and Elena sit at the table, waiting, lost in thought.

They both look up as Eddie steps in, expectant.

ROWDY

Can you help him?

EDDIE

Nope. Don't think no one can.

Eddie heads for the door.

ELENA

At least tell me if he'll eat.

Eddie pauses at the door, horrified by the question.

EDDIE

Yeah. I'd say that's a sure thing.

INT. TIM AND DEREK'S ROOM - NIGHT

The boys lay in their beds. Awake.

There's a sound. Something low and distant. Some sort of baying, a separate sound being carried on the wind.

Derek sits up, almost challenging the window, daring something to happen.

Tim, though, keeps his head under his pillow. He's crying softly. The last few days are taking their toll.

INT. ROWDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rowdy lays on his bed, but the covers are still made, and Rowdy's still fully dressed.

He looks at his own window, at the night outside. There's that sound again. And finally it becomes obvious what we're hearing --

-- *cattle, crying out in pain!*

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Eddie Bear stands up and crosses to his double-wide windows. Wipes away what frost and condensation he can, and peers out into the night.

The cattle sounds are so loud here it's almost like they're right at the door. Just outside.

Eddie can't see anything, though.

He looks again. Catches a glimpse of someone out there, backlit for a moment by the main house.

And then it's gone. Lost in the darkness again.

SHOCK CUT TO:

EXT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - MORNING

Eddie Bear stands on his porch, stares out at the ranch yard.

A DEAD COW, slaughtered, lies frozen to the ground.

Eddie looks up towards the main house. Looks up at the second floor windows to see --

-- Grady. Watching him.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. FRONT ROOM - DAY**

Rowdy stands by the window, on the phone. He can see the dead cow from here.

ROWDY

I'm tellin' you somebody came on to our property and slaughtered one of our cattle. Last night. For no damn reason.

(beat)

I don't know who. That's why I'm callin' you. Why don't you come out here and look for yourself? Do a little investigating?

(beat)

Maybe Thursday, huh?

Rowdy listens, trying not to loose his temper.

ROWDY

Uh-hu. Right. Thanks...

(hangs up; sighs)

... for nothing.

Rowdy turns away from the window and finds Derek in the doorway to the room, listening to his conversation.

ROWDY

Hey, Derek... you hear anything last night?

DEREK

Last night? No. But I've heard plenty on other nights.

ROWDY

... what?

DEREK

Never mind, you dumb sumbitch...

Derek turns and storms out. Exasperated, Rowdy follows.

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - DAY

Derek knows Rowdy can't keep up, intentionally walks fast.

ROWDY

Get back here!

Derek turns on Rowdy, starts back towards him.

DEREK

Where do you get off telling me anything? My dad had to buy this ranch for you to run 'cause you've screwed up everything you've ever touched, and he takes a loss on it every year just so you have a place to live.

Rowdy steps in, grabs Derek by his shirtfront.

ROWDY

Got a mouth on you, boy.

DEREK

So do you. Maybe you should keep it off my mother.

Derek takes a swing at Rowdy, punching him in the face far harder than either of them expects. Rowdy rocks back a bit, and Derek flinches, a little amazed by his actions.

Rowdy pulls Derek close, wipes the blood from his lip, and practically snarls at him.

ROWDY

... and a pretty decent right hook. You should be in there right now, trying to keep your mother happy, and instead, you're pickin' fights with me when all I want to do is keep this place from falling apart.

DEREK

I know what's goin' on. What's been goin' on. I see the way she looks at you. You can fool Tim. But you can't fool me.

They stare each other down for a long moment.

DEREK

Be a whole lot easier if my dad just died, wouldn't it?

Rowdy has no response. He lets go of Derek, pushes him away.

ROWDY

You don't know what you think you know, kid.

Derek marches back into the house.

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - EVENING

Rowdy sits across a card table from Eddie Bear. They both drink coffee, using the mugs to warm their hands.

ROWDY

... thinkin' maybe I'll hire a few new guys for a month. Finish up what's left of the herd.

EDDIE

(barks a laugh)
You cain't hire nobody right now.

ROWDY

Well, you're quitting, and we still got livestock needs looking after.

EDDIE

And you still got that thing sitting upstairs in your house.

ROWDY

That thing is my brother.

EDDIE

Yeah, well... that's debatable.

Eddie stops what he's doing and looks over at Rowdy, and for the first time, Eddie seems like an old man. Frail. Afraid.

EDDIE

Where do you think everyone else is? The cattle? The horses? Chuck and Jasper and Billy J? You think they're all still out there? Just wanderin' around? And what about that cow in the yard? You think it died of natural causes?

ROWDY

I don't know what happened to that cow. And I ain't about to jump to conclusions.

EDDIE

Grady survived ten days in them mountains. And he's the only one came back. Now, how is that?

ROWDY

Do you honestly expect me to believe that my brother, who almost died, and hasn't the strength to even get out of bed, killed a cow in the middle of the night with his bare hands?

EDDIE

A cow ain't the only thing he's killed. And he's whole lot stronger than you think.

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Elena moves around the room, cleaning up, gathering dirty clothes and empty dishes. Careful, she stays far enough away from the bed so that Grady can't grab her unexpectedly.

Grady's wrapped in more than one blanket. Shivering through them, even though he's sweating.

Grady opens his eyes. He seems different, though. When he speaks, his voice is a hoarse croak.

GRADY

... baby?

Elena turns and looks at him, and when she sees the way he's looking at her, tears spring to her eyes.

ELENA

Grady?

She gets closer, and now she's sure: it's Grady.

GRADY

Where am I? What happened?

ELENA

You're home. And... I don't know what happened. You'll have to tell us. What's the last thing you remember before waking up here?

Grady has to really think about it.

GRADY

We got lost. Turned all around. Had to hole up in a shallow cave to stay warm. I remember...

Grady twitches, the memory just below the surface.

GRADY

There was more and more wind... and soon I couldn't even keep the fire lit. I had to eat... I had to...

Grady shakes his head, trying to clear it.

GRADY

... and then... I don't know. I remember... a voice. At my ear... and in my head... all I wanted to do is sleep, but the voice kept telling me not to. "You have to get up. You have to keep moving." And I knew that if I went to sleep, I'd die up there. "I'll save you," the voice said. "Just get up. Let me in, and I'll help you. I'll get you off this mountain."

ELENA

... "let me in"?

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - EVENING

EDDIE

You ever hear of The Wendigo?

ROWDY

Sounds familiar.

EDDIE

The spirit of the lonely places. A hateful thing that lives in the cold winds of the high mountains. It gets inside people when they're weak, starving. Once it gets inside a man... that's it.

ROWDY

What the hell are you taking about?

EDDIE

I've seen this before. When I was a kid. My uncle. And the longer he stayed alive, the worse his hunger got. Eventually, goats and sheep weren't enough for him. People went missing. We all knew. We just pretended not to.

ROWDY

But you don't really believe your
uncle had a ghost inside of him.

EDDIE

Not a ghost. Not exactly. I know
there are some people who think
that the Wendigo is just something
the Cree made up to explain the
rare but not unheard of examples of
cannibalism that happened during
the longer winters.

ROWDY

But you don't think so.

EDDIE

It's real. And no matter how much
it eats, it always wants more. The
more it eats, the stronger it gets.
By the time my father and the
elders tried to cast the Wendigo
out, it was strong... so strong. I
didn't go into the room with them.
I was too afraid. I was just a
kid. But I could hear it. Through
the walls...

(shakes his head)

Once the Wendigo is in you, your
body is no longer your own. Your
hunger can't be stopped or
controlled. Except by death.

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Elena crosses to the door, opens it.

ELENA

Rowdy! Come up here! Grady's awake!

She turns back --

-- and is startled to find Grady standing, wide awake, eyes
fixed on her, no more than a foot away from her.

He holds the blankets wrapped tightly around himself.

And she knows. Right away.

This. Isn't. Grady.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - EVENING

She backs out of the room, slowly, making sure she doesn't turn her back on him, down the hallway, slowly, surely.

Grady emerges from the room, walking slowly.

ELENA

Just lay down, honey. I'll call Doc Morgan...

GRADY

Don't need a doctor. I feel fine.

Grady pulls one arm out from under the blankets that he holds around himself, and as he walks, he reaches out, drags his hand along the wall. His nails leave deep furrows in the wallpaper.

ELENA

Please, baby... go back to bed.

He reaches out and grabs her by the throat. His face mere inches from hers, she can see that his lips are cracked, rotten, like he's starting to decay. He opens his mouth, revealing an awful black tongue.

SH-SHOOOK! There's the unmistakable sound from behind Elena of a shotgun being pumped, the shell being chambered.

She looks behind her. Rowdy stands at the top of the stairs, shotgun in his hands.

ROWDY

Let her go.

Grady snaps his jaws shut. Once. Twice. Testing them.

GRADY

Or what?

Rowdy shakes his head. Doesn't want this to happen.

ROWDY

Don't make me answer that question.

Grady lets go of Elena. She runs, gets behind Rowdy.

ROWDY

Please. Go to bed, brother.

Grady lets out a noise, part bellow, part scream. It's not human, and both Rowdy and Elena step back, bracing themselves for what he might do.

Grady turns and heads back into his room, slamming the door behind him. There's another one of those screams, the sounds of furniture being thrown around the room in fury.

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - EVENING

Eddie Bear sits on his bed. He can hear the sounds of Grady's tantrum all the way out here.

After a moment, as the sounds show no sign of decreasing, Eddie stands up and crosses to his footlocker. He reaches in and takes out a huge sharp work hatchet.

INT. FRONT ROOM - EVENING

Rowdy and Elena hurry down the stairs. They back into this room and get far away from the door. Rowdy keeps the gun close and ready. Just in case.

Elena's shaking, woozy. She can't believe what just happened. Rowdy holds her arm to keep her from collapsing.

ROWDY

You okay?

ELENA

His mouth... and that sound...

ROWDY

Answer me. Are you okay?

ELENA

Yes... I... I think so.

ROWDY

Where are the boys?

There's another crash from upstairs. More of Grady's crazy screaming. The sound of splintering wood.

ELENA

(dawning horror)

Oh, god...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. TIM AND DEREK'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Tim lays curled into a ball, all the way up against the wall, in his bed.

The sounds from Grady's bedroom are awful, louder here. Animal and insane.

TIM

... makehimstoppleasemakehimstop...

Derek tries to get Tim up, but Tim doesn't want to move.

DEREK

Tim, we need to go. Come on.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Rowdy and Elena both jump as the front door SLAMS open --
-- and Eddie Bear steps in, hatchet in hand.

INT. TIM AND DEREK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Derek's drags Tim off the bed by the back of his shirt.

Tim has no choice but to start moving on his own, just to keep the shirt from choking him.

Derek keeps his firm hold, though, pulling Tim toward the door, then kicking it open --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

-- and toward the front stairs, keeping an eye on the door at the end of the hall, Grady's room, where the crazy awful sounds continue unabated.

Just before they reach the front stairs, the door to Grady's room begins to open.

Derek pours on the speed, pushing his brother ahead of him toward the stairs, Tim yelling the whole way --

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

-- and then down, the two of them practically losing their footing as they stumble-slide down the front stairs.

They stop when they see Rowdy and Elena together.

And then they see Eddie Bear. And his hatchet.

And for a moment, no one knows what to say.

Then Grady bellows in the upstairs hallway, much closer than his room, and he still sounds furious, out of control.

ROWDY

What's on your mind, Eddie?

Eddie tests the weight of the hatchet in his hand, looks upstairs toward the sounds of screaming.

EDDIE

You know it's gotta be done.

The sounds above them suddenly stop. Completely. There's nothing from upstairs at all. Almost like Grady's listening to them.

EDDIE

Get out of here. All of you.

ROWDY

We're not leaving you alone in the house with him.

EDDIE

Yes, you are. That's exactly what you're going to do.

That's good enough for Elena. She reaches out and takes Tim by the hand, steers him toward the door.

ELENA

Derek... come on...

Derek hesitates, then relents. Follows his mother and Tim.

Rowdy and Eddie stand together. Still silence from upstairs.

EDDIE

You, too.

ROWDY

I'm not going to ask you to handle this by yourself. He's my brother.

EDDIE

That's why you've gotta go. Look, if I screw this up, you're going to have to kill him. But that should be our last resort.

ROWDY
I don't like this. Any of it.

EDDIE
Me, neither.

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - NIGHT

Elena and the two boys cross the yard, quickly.
Rowdy steps out the front door and follows close behind.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway's empty. Every door stands open.
Except for Grady's. Closed again.
Eddie walks directly down the hall. Doesn't even glance in the other rooms. Goes straight for that closed door.

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddie pushes the door all the way open. Grady's not in his bed. He doesn't appear to be in the room at all.

Eddie turns to go --

-- and Grady lunges out of the hallway from behind him!

Grady grabs Eddie, lifts him, throws him across the room hard enough to crack the paneling on the wall.

Eddie lifts the hatchet, tries to push himself to his feet.

Grady lashes out with enough force to whip Eddie's head around, smash him into the wall.

Eddie slams the hatchet down on Grady's foot.

On Grady's cry of fury and pain --

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Derek sits by the window, like he's on guard. Watches the main house.

Elena sits on one of the beds, trying to console Tim.

Rowdy checks his watch for what must be the thousandth time.

ROWDY
 Enough of this. I'm not sitting
 here waiting. If Eddie's not back,
 he's not coming back. It's been
 two hours.

Rowdy walks over and holds out the shotgun for Derek.

ROWDY
 Take it.

DEREK
 I ain't gonna kill my father if
 that's what...

ROWDY
 You love your mom and your brother?

DEREK
 Of course.

ROWDY
 Then shut up and take it. If I
 don't come back you need to protect
 them. Take it.

Derek finally reaches up and takes the weapon.

ELENA
 Rowdy, if you're going up there
 you'll need that gun.

ROWDY
 I'll get another out of the rack.

Tim looks up at Rowdy, and he can see that this poor kid's
 just barely hanging on in there.

TIM
 Don't hurt him. Please. He's not
 bad. He's just... sick.

Rowdy runs his hand through Tim's hair, like a father would
 to his son, then turns and walks out.

EXT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Rowdy steps out, dreading what he's about to do.

Elena also steps out of the bunkhouse, closes the door, and
 walks up behind Rowdy. She puts a hand on his back.

When he doesn't turn around, she lays her head against his back. He still doesn't turn, staring at the house.

ROWDY

Tell the boys the truth. For me.
When the time's right. If I don't
come back, I want them to know.
Someday they'll understand.

Before she can say anything, Rowdy walks away, marches across the wide open ranch yard.

He keeps his eyes on the main house as he approaches. On the windows upstairs. Looking for anything.

Elena heads back inside the bunkhouse.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The front door stands open. Just an inch.

Rowdy pushes it the rest of the way open, steps inside.
Stops. Listens.

He crosses to a phone on a small table in the foyer, picks it up, tries it. No dial tone. Rowdy's not surprised.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Rowdy walks across the room to the gun rack. Takes his keys out, unlocks the rack, and takes out a high-caliber rifle.

He hears a sound from upstairs. Freezes.

Listens closer. Hears it again. A scratching, flopping something. Rowdy heads into the hall, upstairs, gun up --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

-- and steps off the top step into the upstairs hallway, rifle up, ready to fire.

Stops, horrified, at the sight of Eddie, on the floor in a wide puddle of blood, struggling like a fish drawing its dying breaths.

Rowdy bends down next to him. Sets the rifle aside.

He tries to stem the flow of blood from Eddie's wounds, but it's too late, and they're too deep.

Eddie tries to say something, tries to catch his breath.
Rowdy leans in closer.

EDDIE
... shouldn't... have... tried...

For a moment, Eddie almost seems to focus, like he can see Rowdy, like the pain rolls back for a moment.

EDDIE
... he'll... eat... you all.

And then, very quietly, Eddie dies.

Rowdy snatches up the rifle, furious now.

He cracks the rifle to make sure it's loaded.

ROWDY
GRADY!

He checks each room before he moves past it.

The whole time, he keeps an eye on Grady's closed door.

Once he's sure each room is clear, he steps up to Grady's door. He turns the knob, testing to see if it's locked.

It opens easily. He uses the barrel of the rifle to push the door all the way open.

INT. GRADY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rowdy steps in and stops, surprised.

Grady lies in bed, blankets piled on top of him.

Blood on his hands. A little at the corners of his mouth.

ROWDY
Who do you think you're fooling?
Get up out of that bed.

GRADY
Can't. Too sick.

ROWDY
YOU KILLED EDDIE BEAR!

Grady shakes his head. He's feverish, hair plastered to his scalp, eyes rolling.

GRADY
Had to... had to do it...

Rowdy gets a little closer. He grabs the blankets. Pulls them off.

This is our first real view of Grady since he's come back. The first time without blankets. The first time we can see his body.

He's painfully thin. Skin like milk. Each bone stands out in sharp detail, practically pushing through.

In fact, it's wrong to call him Grady at this point.

This is THE WENDIGO.

WENDIGO

You see? I'm still hungry. I can't help it, Rowdy. Help me. Please... brother...

Rowdy shakes his head. Doesn't want to believe his own eyes.

He raises the rifle, points it in the Wendigo's face.

ROWDY

You mean that? You really want me to help you?

Rowdy clicks the safety off on the rifle.

WENDIGO

Look at me. Look at what I am.

Rowdy puts his finger on the trigger.

WENDIGO

Set Grady free. Let me in, Rowdy.

ROWDY

Never.

The Wendigo reaches up and puts one hand around Rowdy's head. Its disturbingly long fingers wrap around Rowdy's head completely.

WENDIGO

Let me in. Grady's body can't take much more of this. We'll leave Elena and the boys here. I promise. We'll go somewhere else to find food.

Rowdy looks into the Wendigo's face. There's still so much of it that is Grady, just enough that's still human.

ROWDY
 Sorry... *brother*... but I just
 don't believe you.

SLASH! The Wendigo lashes out and cuts Rowdy, across both his arms, cutting deep into muscle and tendon.

He drops the rifle, screams --

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Elena and the boys sit huddled together in one bed.

Outside, the wind rattles the building.

They hear a cry, louder than the wind.

The Wendigo's scream. Somewhere close. Then again. Closer.

Tim buries his face in his mother's shoulder.

ELENA
 Derek, you and your brother get out
 of sight. Hide.

DEREK
 What about you?

Elena stands, takes the gun from Derek, and walks towards the bunkhouse doors, gun up.

ELENA
 I'll be fine.

TIM
 No, mom, please, don't...

ELENA
 Derek, get your brother and hide.

Derek grabs Tim and runs to the furthest point from the door. Together, they crawl under the bunk there.

There's another cry from outside.

Elena checks to make sure the shotgun's ready.

She's shaky, but she stands firm, looking at the door, ready.

BOOM! Something hits the outside of the door. Hard.

She jumps, stumbles back a few steps.

BOOM! Something hits the door again.

ELENA
GRADY, GO AWAY!

She glances over towards the corner where the boys are hiding. She can't see them from where she is.

They can see her, though.

At least, most of her. And they can see the door.

BOOM! The third hit knocks the door loose from its hinges, and for a moment, it stands there, independent of the frame --

-- and then falls flat with a massive THUD!

Elena tries to hold her ground, crying now.

ELENA
Please, Grady... please go away...

The Wendigo steps in, fills the doorway. Wearing clothes now, layers of winter clothes piled on top of each other.

Elena closes her eyes, finger tight on the trigger.

ELENA
... pleasepleaseplease...

She pulls --

-- and then finally releases the trigger. She can't do it. Sobbing, she lowers the gun. The Wendigo pushes the rest of the way in so she can see that it's dragging something.

When she sees that it's Rowdy's body, she opens her mouth to scream, but she's so shocked nothing comes out.

WENDIGO
... brought dinner...

Now she screams. Screams like she's never going to stop.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT**

The Wendigo drops the shotgun into the gun case and slams it closed so it automatically locks.

SHOCK CUT TO:**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

WHAM! The Wendigo slams Rowdy's body down onto the huge butcher's block island in the middle of the kitchen.

Elena stands as far away from the Wendigo as she can. Still crying. She watches as he moves around the kitchen to where there's a butcher's block.

He grabs a cleaver from it and whips it across the room at her. It sticks in the counter. She screams, just a little.

WENDIGO
(points at Rowdy)
Cook it.

She shakes her head. Can't imagine what it's asking.

The Wendigo lashes out and punches the side of the steel refrigerator, bashing in the entire side.

WENDIGO
COOK IT!

She tries to pull the cleaver free. Has to put her whole weight into it.

She finally works it free, and she turns to look down at Rowdy's body.

ELENA
Rowdy...

The Wendigo lashes out again. Again. Beating the refrigerator out of shape with each blow.

WENDIGO
IT'S! JUST! MEAT! COOK IT!

She reaches out and closes both of Rowdy's eyes. She takes a moment to gather herself, trying to regain some composure.

Finally, she lifts the cleaver and, as she brings it down --

INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

-- Derek and Tim slip out from their hiding place. Tim's still crying. Inconsolable.

TIM

I want to wake up, Derek. I don't wanna have this dream no more.

DEREK

We have to help mom.

TIM

No! I can't! I want to stay here!

DEREK

She'll die! Do you want that?!

Tim shakes his head.

DEREK

He took the gun. He's still smart enough to do that. We've got to get into the house and figure out a way to get mom away from him.

TIM

Don't make me go in the house.

DEREK

I'm not going to make you do anything. But I have to go.

Derek walks across the room to the doorway. Looks back at Tim, who hasn't moved an inch.

DEREK

Stay here and keep quiet.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elena works with a grim determination, never looking down at what she's doing. Detaches herself from the physical act.

As a result, we shouldn't see much of it either. All the cutting and chopping is done OFF-CAMERA.

She sets aside the work with the body for a moment to start filling a large cooking pot with water.

She steals a quick glance across the room at the Wendigo.

Suddenly, something occurs to the Wendigo.

WENDIGO

Where are... my boys?

Elena looks away, not wanting to answer. She sets the water on the stove, turns it on.

ELENA

If this family still means anything to you... stop this. Please.

She looks back at him. Past tears now. Numb.

The Wendigo flicks its wrist, splattering Elena with the gore off its fingertips. It practically growls a single word:

WENDIGO

... hunnnnnnnngry....

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek crouches behind a couch, out of the Wendigo's line of sight. He can see the gun rack from where he is.

He also sees Rowdy's discarded jacket on the kitchen floor.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Wendigo takes a step towards Elena.

As she moves to put some distance between her and the Wendigo again, she spots Derek.

He's quietly moving out of his hiding place, across the open floor. Towards Rowdy's jacket.

She steels herself for what she has to do.

She starts to dump the chopped-up Rowdy into the pot of water, still not looking at it.

Again, the body parts are all OFF-CAMERA.

She picks up the cover for the pot and slams it on, drawing the Wendigo's full attention.

Once she knows he's looking at her, she tries to smile at him. Tries to speak with some degree of warmth.

ELENA

Are you still in there, baby?

She starts to move toward the Wendigo instead of away from it. She tries to look like she's not afraid.

ELENA

You were today. When you looked in
my eyes... I could see it was you.
You're not gone completely.

As she gets closer, the Wendigo backs away, freaked out, not sure what she's doing. He snaps his jaws at her a few times.

She glances quickly at Derek, afraid to look at him too long and tip the Wendigo off.

He's in the kitchen now. About five feet from the jacket. Moving quietly. Watching the Wendigo carefully.

ELENA

I want my husband back.

She reaches out to touch him as she gets closer.

ELENA

... please... Grady...

She's only a few feet away from the Wendigo now.

Derek reach the jacket. Carefully, he reaches into the first pocket. The keys shift, giving a slight jingle.

ELENA

... you let it in. Tell it to go.

The Wendigo lashes out, one powerful blow to her chest.

She cries out as she's thrown across the room, hitting the cabinets so hard that one of them breaks.

She collapses to the floor, sucking air desperately, trying to catch her breath. She puts one hand to her chest, afraid something's broken or collapsed.

Derek quietly draws Rowdy's keys from the pocket.

Even with her eyes rolling wildly in pain, she sees Derek, sees him backing off now. Out of the room. Then gone.

She finds her voice. Forces herself to speak.

ELENA

... can't kill me yet...

The Wendigo bares its teeth at her, makes a bizarre clacking sound, sucking at its own teeth.

ELENA

... not done... cooking.

The Wendigo glances over at the stove. Sniffs the air.

WENDIGO

NOW!

The Wendigo smashes both fists down on the butcher's block, splintering it.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek hurries over to the gun case.

Searches the keychain. Finds the right key.

He slides the key into the lock. Looks over at the kitchen as he turns it.

The CLICK! it makes seems incredibly loud.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Loud enough to get the Wendigo to look in the direction of the front room for a moment.

Elena pushes herself to her feet, lets out a strangled growl of pain as she does so. The Wendigo watches her try to catch her breath. In pain. She takes down a large soup bowl. Finds a ladle in a drawer.

She takes the lid off the pot and looks inside. We don't see what's cooking, but she barely holds back the bile that rushes up her throat. She gags a little, looks away for a moment while she fights the urge.

Finally, she dishes up what's in the pot.

She walks across the kitchen to the table and sets the soup bowl down.

ELENA

Okay. Here it is.

The Wendigo crosses in two quick steps and stands over the table, glowering down at it.

WENDIGO

Another.

ELENA

You haven't even eaten that one.

WENDIGO

For you.

ELENA

You just asked me to cook it. You can have it all. Please...

WENDIGO

ANOTHER! FOR YOU!

Tears spring to her eyes as she backs off.

ELENA

... but... I'm not hungry...

WENDIGO

E A T!

She sees there's no room to argue. She takes down another soup bowl. And as she dishes up another helping of Rowdy, she sobs openly, shaking, spilling it.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek tries to open the gun case, just an inch, but the hinge on it squeaks, incredibly loud.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The noise makes her hands shake a little bit more as Elena brings the bowl up to her face and inhales loudly.

ELENA

Mmmm... smells good...

She almost retches, but holds it back.

She walks back to the table, making sure the Wendigo keeps its eyes on her as she goes.

ELENA

You told me to cook it. I did. So sit down now... and let's eat.

She sits down at the table. The Wendigo moves over to its spot at the table, looks down at its bowl of "soup."

WENDIGO

Eat.

She picks up a spoon from the table. She considers the bowl in front of her.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek tries to open the case again. The hinge squeaks again, even louder.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Wendigo turns, sure it heard something.

Elena gets a big spoonful from her bowl.

ELENA

Look. I'm eating.

Brings it up to her mouth.

The Wendigo watches her closely.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek uses the sound to pull the case all the way open.

He pulls out a shotgun, cracks it.

No shells. Empty.

He sighs as he pulls the keys loose and looks at the drawers on the gun case. Each of them locked as well.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elena can't do it. She gags, drops the spoon.

The Wendigo laughs at her, a hysterical sound. It buries its face in its own bowl and slurps loudly tries to get it all in its mouth as quickly as possible.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek works quickly. He unlocks the first drawer, opens it, doesn't worry about the sound anymore.

He finds a box of shells, grabs it out of the drawer. He fumbles it open and drops it, shells spilling everywhere.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Wendigo doesn't hear anything over the sounds it's making as it comes up from the bowl, mouth full of pieces of Rowdy, chewing with enough force that Elena can hear the bones in the meat cracking with each bite.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Derek shoves shells into his pocket, then pushes two of them into the shotgun.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Wendigo finishes everything in its bowl, throws it against the wall where it shatters.

She pushes the bowl away. Can't even look at it.

ELENA

No. I can't. I won't.

The Wendigo jumps up, knocks the table out of the way. Pushes its face right up in front of Elena.

She slaps the Wendigo across the face, as hard as she can. It actually shrinks back from her a little.

She raises her arm and swings again.

This time, the Wendigo catches her arm mid-swing.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Elena screams as Derek snaps the shotgun closed. He runs for the kitchen, gun up --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

-- and finds the Wendigo holding his mother by the wrist so she dangles a few inches off the floor, face-to-face.

She screams, in pain and afraid. The Wendigo smells her, then licks her underarm, the same place it licked earlier. She keeps screaming.

DEREK

HEY!

The Wendigo and Elena turn at the same moment to look at Derek. The Wendigo just smiles.

ELENA

Run.

DEREK

Put my mother down, you bastard.

The Wendigo laughs.

DEREK
I SAID PUT HER DOWN!

BLAM! Derek squeezes the trigger, maybe on purpose, maybe accidentally. The gun barrel belches fire and the Wendigo catches the blast in the shoulder.

The Wendigo throws Elena across the room like a rag doll. She bounces off the far wall with tremendous force and falls the floor.

The Wendigo takes off running out the back door, vanishing into the night.

Derek runs to Elena. She's still alive. Barely.

This kid, so tough all the time, so determined, just breaks like glass when he sees his mother banged up like this.

DEREK
Mom. Please. Don't die.

ELENA
(weak)
Protect... Tim. Don't worry...
about me. I'm... fine...

DEREK
You're not fine, mom.

There's a sound. Outside. The cry of the Wendigo.

Elena grabs her son by the arm firmly, pulls him close.

ELENA
Go.

She releases him and falls back. Derek knows she's right and runs out the way the Wendigo left.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE**INT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT**

Tim cowers under one of the beds. Shivering.

He hears footsteps on the steps up to the bunkhouse.

He watches as the Wendigo walks into the bunkhouse. He can see the creature's feet and legs.

Even worse, he can hear its diseased whisper, almost like it's inside Tim's head.

WENDIGO

Tiiiiiiiiimmmmm... come out, boy.

Tim pushes himself back further into shadow.

The Wendigo starts to flip beds, toss them aside. Tim can hear it more than see it. The Wendigo moves through the bunkhouse, tossing bunks randomly.

WENDIGO

Tiiiiiiiiimmmmm...

It sounds like the Wendigo's getting closer. Tim looks around, but there's nowhere for him to go.

Tim closes his eyes. Covers his ears. He doesn't want to see or hear this. Can't take any more of it.

The noises of things being smashed continue for a few moments, then abruptly stop.

After a moment, Tim cautiously removes his hands from his ears. Listens for a moment.

The only sound is the wind outside. Tim waits another moment. Finally has to see for himself.

He crawls out from under the bed. He moves up into a crouch and looks around the room. Everything appears to be clear. He turns, keeps turning --

-- and comes face-to-face with the Wendigo, perched on top of the bed where Tim was hiding, waiting for him!

Tim screams. He jumps up and runs for the door.

The Wendigo leaps off the bed, though, and in two quick steps, he catches up to Tim.

He reaches out and grabs the boy by the wrist, wrenching him around. Tim screams again.

Tim fights and scratches and kicks and tries to bite, but it does no good at all. The Wendigo doesn't even seem to notice Tim's efforts.

Derek steps up into the doorway, gun up.

DEREK
LET HIM GO!

The Wendigo turns. Pleased to see Derek. It pulls Tim around so he's between Derek and the Wendigo. There's no way for Derek to fire the gun.

WENDIGO
Glad you're here.

The Wendigo wraps its fingers around Tim's throat and slowly squeezes.

DEREK
Don't.

The Wendigo keeps squeezing, cutting off Tim's air completely.

WENDIGO
We should be together. All of us.
Your mother, Rowdy, you and Tim...
inside of me. To make me stronger.

The Wendigo lifts Tim off the ground by the neck. He struggles to survive, but he hasn't much fight left in him.

DEREK
Daddy... let him go... please...

WENDIGO
(laughs)
Daddy? I'm not your daddy.

Suddenly, Tim pulls with his last bit of strength. The Wendigo's not expecting it, either, so Tim's able to pull the creature's other hand to his mouth --

-- and Tim bites a couple of the Wendigo's fingers clean off!

Shocked, furious, the Wendigo lets loose an unearthly howl and flings Tim across the room.

And in that moment, Derek fires!

The shotgun blast hits the Wendigo in the chest. Knocks it back into the wall, and then it drops. Not moving.

Derek runs over to his brother, who lays curled in a ball, sobbing.

DEREK
We don't have time for that right now. Get up. GET UP, TIM!

He hauls Tim to his feet.

The two of them walk over, cautious, and look down at the Wendigo's prone figure.

For the moment, the Wendigo almost looks like their father again. His face slack like this, all of the malice is gone, and he just looks sick, used up.

DEREK
Come on. We have to go.

EXT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

They stumble out onto the steps.

TIM
What are we going to do now?

DEREK
Mom's hurt bad. There's no phone, so we have to leave. Get off the mountain. Bring help. I've got Rowdy's keys. We can use his truck.

TIM
Uncle Rowdy said we aren't supposed to drive his truck. Ever.

DEREK
ROWDY'S DEAD, TIM! HE'S DEAD! HE WON'T CARE IF WE BORROW THE DAMN TRUCK! OKAY?!

That shuts Tim up.

Derek looks back in, at his father's body on the floor. Knows how hard this has been on Tim, how insane this all is.

DEREK
I'm sorry.

TIM

I don't mean to ask so many questions. I'm just...

DEREK

Yeah, I know. Me, too. Let's go get the keys and Mom and get moving. Okay?

Tim glances back at their father one last time.

The Wendigo is gone.

TIM

Derek...

WHAM! The Wendigo slams into Derek like a freight train. Hits him hard enough to send the shotgun skittering off.

The Wendigo grabs Derek with both hands and lifts him off the ground, bringing him up to face him.

There's nothing left of Grady now. Whatever this thing is, it's pure animal, pure anger. Dangerous and awful and dying, the skin around its mouth already rotten and decayed.

It starts to shake the living shit out of Derek.

As it roars again, opening its mouth to take a bite out of Derek's neck --

-- the barrel of the shotgun is suddenly jammed up all the way to the back of the Wendigo's mouth --

-- *by Elena.*

She pumps the shotgun, tears in his eyes.

ELENA

You're not my husband.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - NIGHT

BLAM! The blast echoes like thunder.

EXT. COWHAND'S BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

The Wendigo's on the ground. Finally dead. No question.

Elena and her boys take a moment to catch their breath as the wind kicks up around them.

Derek sits up, in great pain. Tim helps him to his feet.

They look at their mother, who hasn't moved at all. She just stands there holding the shotgun on Grady's body.

Derek puts his hand on the gun. She won't let it go at first, but he finally manages to take it from her.

DEREK

It's over.

INT. ROWDY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

The three of them huddle together in the cab, cold.

Derek sits behind the wheel, starts the engine, lets it idle for a moment. He flips on the headlights, illuminating Grady's body on the ground a few yards away.

Elena can't take her eyes off it.

EXT. EDLUND RANCH - NIGHT

Derek puts the truck in gear and starts to drive off. And as the vehicle disappears into the darkness, there's a sound. Very faint, but definitely there, just at the edge of hearing, carried on the wind.

The distant sound of a Wendigo's cry.

FADE TO BLACK