

Hunted

By

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BLACK:

An increasingly loud rumbling coincides with the sound of branches and leaves, cracking against one another, before the crescendo of noise is bought to a grinding halt.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATCH OF OPEN SPACE - FOREST - DAY

We closely focus on the face of Raymond as he suddenly awakens in a state of shock and breathing heavily.

We turn to the image of blue skies and tree tops, which is all he can currently see. We then turn back to Raymond as he continues to catch his breath.

From further away, we see Raymond laying flat out on his back, slowly lifting himself up within the middle of this open space. As he sits himself up, his breathing begins to become stable as he looks side to side, clearly confused as to his whereabouts.

As though a light has been switched on inside his head, Raymond reaches to his back pocket and pulls out a bog standard mobile and quickly begins to call someone. Relief washes over his face as a woman answers the call. Her voice can be immediately heard before Raymond can start to speak, whose facial expression now quickly turns sour. He holds the phone out in front of him and looks at it confusingly. We can now hear what the woman is saying.

WOMAN

(Robotic like)

You've been doing great. Just keep on trying and I'm sure we'll make some progress.

Raymond's confusion gradually turns to fear as the female voice continues to repeat this over and over, as though on a loop. He cancels the call and places the phone back in his pocket before attempting to stand up.

Whilst bringing himself to his feet, a crunch is heard from somewhere amongst the trees. As he looks to his left, he quickly snaps back to his right after another crunching sound is made. The cracking sound becomes louder from behind him. He turns and slowly paces towards the noise before a rumbling is heard through the trees, now surrounding him.

The thrashing of leaves and crunching of branches becomes more and more violent before calmly phasing out, as though just a turbulent patch of wind. The brief end of this

(CONTINUED)

harrowing weather is reflected through Raymond's relieved expression. Assuming this frantic spell has now passed, he spins round and begins to move on through the woods.

But before taking more than three steps, a eerie gargling sound freezes him in his tracks. The gargle sways through the trees, increasing in volume as it creeps towards Raymond. The noise continues to linger from behind Raymond, who slowly turns to face the cause of his fear.

Upon turning around, Raymond witnesses something which causes him to frantically sprint off within the forest. Jumping over large branches and dodging trees, he pushes on away from the terrifying presence that chases him further into the woods. Whilst moving onwards, he glances through the trees in search of something, anything to help him avoid the clutches of what is hunting him.

Unable to find any means of an escape, the presence moves closer towards him. But just as it closes in on him Raymond suddenly trips and crashes into a ditch, three feet beneath.

Raymond instantly cowers into his hands and knees, expecting the presence to finally have caught up to him. As he whimpers to himself, he becomes relieved to find that his fall has seemingly eluded the unknown presence.

He looks around to see if he is now truly safe. We follow Raymond as he scuttles under the ditch. Catching his breath, Raymond holds his hand to his chest. He clearly is in some discomfort and begins to concentrate on his breathing.

After a while the pain appears to have past and he looks on outwardly to see if the coast is clear. Upon pushing himself to his feet, his hand squashes against something in the midst of the muddy ditch.

He looks down and fiddles through the mud to find a small teddy bear, ragged and torn, clearly unkempt. He pulls on its left arm and tears it away, acting mildly surprised as he does so. He continues to stare at the toy.

The wind begins to pick up and Raymond now focuses his attention away from the bear, looking out at the forest.

RAYMOND

Shit!

He throws the teddy and sits up, before moving forward into the trees. He cautiously wades through the branches, slowly stepping further onwards. Shifting side to side, Raymond continues to look for his predator.

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The sound of a bell is heard ringing through the woods. Raymond looks for its source, but to no avail. We then hear a light thud hit the ground only a few feet away from where he stands. He timidly moves towards the thud to see a rolled up bundle of paper. Raymond falls to his knees and unwraps it.

We see an old fashioned newspaper, presumably from sometime between the 1970's and the 1980's. The paper is aged with a slightly brown tinge and written with an old press, style font. Raymond appears distressed when he see's the title of the paper that reads, 'THE DAILY KILLINGS', with killings written over with red crayon.

His anxiety increases as he continues to unfold the paper and sees the articles headline of, 'COUNTRYSIDE SAVAGERY'. We continue to focus on the newspaper as a picture of a person begins to appear. But before the image is revealed, the mysterious gargling reappears causing Raymond to quickly drop the paper and run.

We continue to quickly move with Raymond into the forest. Just as before the heavy weather picks up with the suggested reappearance of the unsighted presence.

Moving onwards, Raymond continues attempting to gain yards on the presence. His progress is then made more challenging when a camera flash goes off, seemingly out of nowhere.

Temporarily blinded, he covers his eyes and uses his other hand to bat away the branches. As he moves his hand from his eyes, more and more flashes come from the trees, continuing to blur his vision. We see the chaos ensue as Raymond begins to bash into trees either side of him. Clearly unable to keep his balance, he eventually falls to the ground.

RAYMOND
(Clearly hurt)
Fuckkk!

Yelling in pain, Raymond rolls off the crushed glass he has just unexpectedly landed on. A small section of the ground is covered in broken glass, with empty wine bottles scattered around next to the patch. Whilst resting his palm over his side, Raymond lifts his jacket and is revealed to find no wounds. He picks up and inspects one of the empty bottles, to see it and the others have no labels.

He tosses the bottle and picks himself up, clearly frustrated and angered by his predicament.

From behind we continue to follow Raymond, as he pushes on into the vast woodland, searching for his escape. The wind again begins to blow through the trees. The suggestion that comes with the weather now appears to frustrate Raymond more than worry him.

Ignoring the heavy winds, we see him attempt to overcome his fear and keep on moving forward. However, his stern facial expression is quickly jolted as the gargling can now be heard in front of him. We are positioned with Raymond as we see branches snapping ahead of him, whilst its volume increases.

Raymond turns and once again sprints, but is now moving to the right of the direction which he has been travelling towards. Faced with the all too familiar situation of escaping the luring presence, he attempts to loose it by swaying in and out of the trees. Left to right, he dodges the trunks with the hope that his hunter will fail to do the same.

Still running, Raymond is forcefully thrown through the air and crashes to the ground.

RAYMOND
(Agonisingly)
AARRGGHHHH!

He clutches his side and rolls around the ground in pain. Twisting and turning, unable to catch his breath. He coughs and yelps in agony whilst looking around him to ensure he is safe.

He manages to lift himself in an upright position and turns to see a small, red toy car with its front smashed, next to him. Whilst struggling, he reaches and picks it up. Its tiny bonnet and windscreen are smashed inwards, as though it had been in a crash.

Raymond lies back down and attempts to recover his breath. After a few seconds he forces himself back to his feet when the gargling and heavy winds return. He looks around and attempts to spot the direction he was initially moving towards, but from his positioning we see only trees.

He limps forward as fast as he can, attempting to quicken his pace whilst still clutching his side. The presence shortens its distance on Raymond, who now appears terrified. He positions himself behind a large tree. We focus on Raymond through a steady frame in the foreground, whilst branches and leaves fall in the background.

Relief covers Raymond's face as the noise drifts away from his location. He once again picks himself up and carries on forward.

After moving with Raymond, we track around a large tree to see a woman sat on a chair at the end of a table. She is dressed in a very formal outfit of a white shirt and a black skirt, with glasses and her brown hair made up into a bun.

She gestures to Raymond to sit on the chair, placed at the opposing end. Surprisingly calm, Raymond willing sits and faces the woman.

RAYMOND

Cheryl, I tried rin--

CHERYL

(Interrupting)

Please there's no need to explain.

Cheryl flicks through papers placed in front of her, before tilting her glasses and facing Raymond.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Now Raymond please, tell me how you've been doing since we last spoke?

RAYMOND

(Confused)

Since we last spoke?

CHERYL

(Firm and professional)

Yes. The last time we spoke...

There's a brief pause between the two, as Cheryl awaits a response.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

(Patronisingly)

About the incident...

RAYMOND

I don't...

Cheryl slams her papers and removes her glasses.

CHERYL

(Angrily)

Oh please not this again.

We look back at Raymond who now appears confused and upset.

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CHERYL(CONT'D)

You can never just bring it up
yourself can you? Never able to
face your own responsibilities.

Raymond begins to tear up.

RAYMOND

(Sobbing)

Why are y--

CHERYL

How do you possibly expect us to
get anywhere, if you wont even talk
about what happened!

Raymond now is holding his head in his hands, continuing to
sob.

RAYMOND

(Sobbing)

Mother please...

CHERYL

(Angrily)

You need to stop calling me that,
how many god damn times.

Raymond drops his head to the table and proceeds to weep.
Cheryl sighs and strokes her forehead before leaning in
towards him.

CHERYL(CONT'D)

(Calm)

Listen, Raymond. I only mean to
help you, you know this.

She leans in further.

CHERYL(CONT'D)

Honestly above all, you've been
doing great. Just keep on trying
and I'm sure we'll make some
progress.

Raymond now slightly lifts his head off the table.

RAYMOND

(Confused)

What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CHERYL

I said, you've been doing great.
Just keep on trying and I'm sure
we'll make some progress.

Raymond now lifts his head fully off the table and looks directly at Cheryl.

CHERYL(CONT'D)

Did you hear me? You've been doing
great. Just keep on trying and I'm
sure we'll make some progress.

We move closer and closer to Cheryl's face.

CHERYL(CONT'D)

You've been doing great. Just keep
on trying and I'm sure we'll make
some progress.

Her voice begins to turn robotic.

CHERYL(CONT'D)

You've been doing great. Just keep
on trying and I'm sure we'll make
some progress.

As she continues to repeat this, Raymond hears gargling from behind him and turns his head to see where it came from. Upon seeing nothing, he turns back to see that Cheryl has disappeared.

He looks past the chair and sees two hitch-hikers, one male and one female, walking on through the trees. He stands up and yells out to them.

RAYMOND

(Muffled)

HELP!HELP!

His cries for help are however murmured and begin to drown out, causing the two hikers to be unaware of his repeated yelling.

He moves forward after them both, still clutching on to his side, shuffling in between the trees and branches. He eventually comes to the location in which they were both originally stood and after looking around, he sees the two moving forward out on to a road. He hastily follows and comes to the road.

We now only see a close up on Raymond's eyes. Whilst breathing frantically he looks side to side down the road

(CONTINUED)

before focusing his attention on something moving up the path. The sound suggests a car moving at a high speed. We then hear a second car coming in the opposite direction, to which Raymond then follows with his eyes. The two sounds become clearer and clearer before we see Raymond quickly shut his eyes as a collision is heard. He opens his eyes and gasps, then covers his mouth.

We move back to see Raymond's full body as he begins to shed a tear. He is moving his head away from the presumed crash site, whilst occasionally looking back at the collision.

We are then positioned sideways on, with Raymond at the far end of the shot to the right. The heavy winds and eerie gargling begin to culminate as we track from left to right, blackening out the screen as we go along before reaching Raymond at the end and filling the screen with darkness.

BLACK:

Continues with the same sound.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATCH OF OPEN SPACE - FOREST - DAY

We are closely focused on Raymond's face, who is again laying flat on his back on the ground. We turn to the trees and the blue sky before he forces himself to sit up. As he gets to his knees, he is halted by a heavy gust of wind followed by a mysterious gargling noise. He sharply looks up.

CUT TO BLACK*

THE END.