

Altar

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EXT. ROCKY SURFACE OF AN UNKNOWN AREA, UNKNOWN TIME PERIOD

A SHROUDED FIGURE trudges through a harsh landscape, skidding through rocks and hopping over mudbanks. The sun reflects the planet's surface and illuminates the figure crawling amongst the geography. The figure mopes slowly through the unforgiving soil, tripping and collapsing onto the Earth.

Noticing worms bathing on concrete, the figure pauses to fish the creatures from the ground and slurps the bodies between dirty fingers. Smiling, the figure continues searching for worms, scaling the rocky geography until arriving at the hill's peak. The figure, draped in business clothes and a 20th century newsboy cap, feels a presence and begins to survey the area, spotting a jagged shape on the horizon. Hearing crows, but not seeing crows, the figure stumbles farther up the hill and eventually sees THE STUMP - the remnants of a dead tree once submerged beneath a river, white and pointed like elephant tusks. The figure removes a notebook from his breast pocket and flips through the pages, finding a sketch of the stump parked on top of the hill.

The figure begins scaling the cliffside against a scorching sun, sweat collecting beneath his cap, and after a desperate climb uphill, the figure approaches the ruin.

THE STUMP is ominous yet mystical, radiating a dark presence that brings THE FIGURE to his knees. Crawling, the figure moves closer while eyeballing what appears to be an altar. For a second, the figure sees a television parked at the base of the stump, playing images and beckoning the figure to move closer. The figure crawls slowly to the spot where the television once stood, but the television is gone. Removing the notebook and a black crayon from his breast pocket, the stranger begins chanting.

FIGURE

Attah! Attah! Hear me. Hear me.

Attah! Attah! Hear me, Hear me.

The figure reaches into a pocket and summons a red knife. While chanting, the figure rolls up his sleeves, revealing scars and mangled flesh, and without hesitation, slices his own arm, tearing and scissoring until blood engulfs the ground. In response, the altar begins to reverberate. Violent images and sinister sound effects plague the figure, who holds onto the terrain for dear life. Bleeding from his arms, the figure wipes the blood onto the white tusks of the stump and screams.

FIGURE (CONT'D)

Attah! Attah! Attah! Attah! Attah!

A silence ensues and the stump begins to talk.

STUMP

Why do you wake me, child? I am so tired. I am so tired. Why do you wake me?

The figure is sprawled across the ground, praying, bowing.

FIGURE

Please mother, I ask for your forgiveness! Please!

STUMP

Forgiveness? Forgiveness? I have no need for you, let alone your forgiveness, boy.

FIGURE

Please, I come in search of the secrets.

STUMP

Secrets? Secrets? Secrets?
And where is your offering?

The figure begins stuttering and panicking.

FIGURE

I, I, I , don't, don't.....

STUMP

Then our work here is done.

A deafening screech penetrates the figure causing him to roll in agony. Tearing at his skull and pounding his head into rocks, the figure attempts to resist the incoming barrage.

The figure awakens floating in the river.

Panicked and rushed, the figure pulls himself from the river and begins a marathon sprint. Crossing over rocks, dodging puddles, and crossing through heavy grass, the figure stumbles upon a log cabin in the middle of nowhere. The figure begins peeking through the windows of the property, before readying himself by the front door with the pocket knife. The figure paces back and forth nervously, angrily, before finally pausing to knock on the door.

EXT. CABIN NIGHTTIME

A young man approaches the door. We cannot see the young man, but we can hear his voice.

MAN

Hello, may I help you?

Silence.

MAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, it's late, I said is there something I can help you with?

Silence.

MAN (CONT'D)

Hey man, I don't have to deal with this, okay?

The figure stabs the man and pushes him into the cabin, closing the door behind him. The man screams and a woman screams hysterically behind him.

MAN (CONT'D)

Get the kids, get the fucking kids.
Ahhhhhh, fuck fuck fuck.

We don't see what's happening but we hear screaming, commotion, furniture falling. A gunshot rings and a lights flicker off. After a fight to the death, the screams go silent and the house goes still. We don't hear anything except a crying baby. We still can't see the figure but we hear him walking across broken glass. The sounds of the baby grow louder and closer until finally the figure emerges into the darkness of night carrying a baby in a cardboard box.

The figure takes the path he came, climbing through shrubbery, climbing over rocks, and dancing across mud.

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The figure approaches the altar with the baby in the box, and sits down on the ground like a sack of potatoes. Pulling up his shirt we notice the figure's been shot. Taking deep breaths, the figure lies on the ground until the sound of the baby breaks the silence. Basking in the cries of the baby, it appears the figure might die. The television is back and it's playing images of death and war, until next thing we know, the figure is back on his feet.

The figure glares at the baby box until finally removing the knife. Hovering over the box, the killer mimics a fast stabbing motion, pretending to kill the baby in a single strike. Unsatisfied, the figure places the knife back into his pocket and begins scouring the ground for a large rock.

When the figure discovers a large and oddly shaped rock, he marches over to the altar and attempts the ritual for the second time. Removing the notebook and crayon, the figure scribbles the incantations and summoning spells. The figure places the book into the baby box and picks up the large rock. Raising the rock higher and higher, the figure begins to chant.

THE FIGURE

Blood of my mother, blood of my
father. Blood of my blood.
Knowledge, power. The prince of
darkness shall rise. May evil
reign. May evil reign. Attah!

The figure smashes the skull of the crying baby, followed by the instant deterioration of reality. The head explodes into a gory phantasm followed by the world glitching into a dark psychedelic hellscape. The figure is sucked into this psychedelic world and the rocky surroundings are engulfed into light.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND

A fire roars and somebody can be heard chewing.

The figure sits by the roaring flames, chewing a piece of gamey meat, and watching a television while sitting on a small private island. The fire roars and the television plays while the figure eats totally uninterrupted.

The last shot shows the camera sweeping over the rocky landscape and darting toward the horizon before finally resting on the tree-line and the setting sun.