

THE SIGNAL

by

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TEASER

CLOSE ON:

A pair of gloved HANDS...

One grabs a leather satchel.

The other grabs a large KNIFE. Hides it within the folds of an animal-skin coat.

EXT. MIDDLE OF THE WOODS, RUSTIC CABIN - DAY

Light snow falls upon a rustic cabin nestled among tall, quiet pines.

The front door CREAKS open. Out steps...

THE HERMIT, age unknown, wearing the animal skin overcoat, his face hidden beneath a large hood.

The hermit takes out a pair of EARPLUGS and sticks them in his ears. We do not see his face.

EXT. MIDDLE OF THE WOODS - DAY

The hermit moves swift and silent through the dense forest.

He carefully steps past a series of BEAR TRAPS half-hidden among the leaves.

Continues walking.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAY

The hermit leaves the shady forest and starts down an empty dirt road.

EXT. PINE BRUSH TOWN - DAY

The hermit arrives on the outskirts of a small town. Passes a hand-painted sign: PINE BRUSH, Pop. 12,301.

The buildings of Pine Brush haven't been updated in decades. Most are abandoned, businesses closed and boarded up. A few old, beaten-up cars scattered about.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

The hermit walks down a cracked sidewalk. A FAMILY coming from the opposite direction crosses the street to avoid the scary-looking individual.

INT. CRAPPY GENERAL STORE - DAY

The place is empty except for BOB: 30s, balding, fat. He sits behind the grimy counter reading a hunting magazine.

DING!

The hermit enters. Bob looks up from his magazine.

BOB
Howdy. Can I help you with anything?

The hermit doesn't answer. Sets his leather satchel on the counter. Grabs a few items from the shelves: bars of soap, Aspirin, tissues, candy bars.

The hermit opens his satchel, pulls out a stack of musty old bills. Roughly \$10.

Bob bags up the items the hermit grabbed when the phone RINGS. Bob picks it up.

BOB (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Bob's General Store, how can I hel--

BOB'S POV: *An eerie, high-pitched SQUEAL emits from the receiver.*

This is THE SIGNAL.

Bob's mouth falls slack. Spittle drips from his lips. His eyes dim in color. His skin pales.

The hermit backs away from the counter, but Bob grabs the hermit before he can escape.

Bob rips the drifter's hood off, revealing...

MICHELLE, 30, cute but very tired. Bangs cover her forehead.

Bob smiles. When he speaks, it's not his voice at all, but something cold and metallic, as if coming from a phone speaker.

[NOTE: from here on out, whenever a character is under the control of the Signal his dialogue will be show (tapped)]

BOB (CONT'D)
(tapped)
Oh Michelle, You look terrible.

Michelle hits Bob's arm, causing him to let go of her coat. She pulls out the KNIFE she had hidden in her coat.

Bob drops the phone. Lunges over the counter with inhuman strength. He charges Michelle, knocking her flat on her back.

She drops the knife. It slides down one of the aisles of the store.

Bob crawls on top of Michelle, pinning her to floor beneath his immense legs. His arms reach for Michelle's head.

He's trying to pull out her ear plugs.

BOB (CONT'D)
(tapped)
Please... Let me help you.

Michelle knees Bob in the crotch. Hard. Bob's eyes momentarily lose their cloudiness. He "wakes up."

Michelle crawls out from under Bob. Gets to her feet.

Bob's eyes return to their cloudy, trance-like state. He gets up and faces Michelle. Marches towards her, forcing her to back down the hardware aisle of the store.

Michelle keeps backing away her, her feet almost at the knife she dropped earlier.

Bob grabs a hammer hanging from a tool shelf nearby.

BOB (CONT'D)
(tapped)
Now don't do anything rash. You're smarter than that.

Michelle picks up her knife.

Bob raises his hammer.

It's a tense standoff.

Bob rushes at Michelle, but she's faster as she...

RAMS the knife in between Bob's ribs.