

DARK PASSENGER

An original radio drama by  
Frederick Greenhalgh

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fred@finalrune.com

<http://www.finalrune.com>

DARK PASSENGER

CAST

NARRATOR	Voice of the dark passenger
MATT	Young man, carries the passenger
DAVID	A young man's friend
TIMMY	A young boy
FATHER	Father to the children
BETHANY	A young girl
MOTHER	Mother to the children

DARK PASSENGER

SCENE ONE: INT. CAR - DUSK

(Narrator, Matt, David)

NARRATOR: It was a long time since I'd driven down the long road to that dark house...

MUSIC: LOW AND OMINOUS

NARRATOR: ...But as the leaves changed that year, something called me back. A certain way the wind moved. The way the moon bore down on me on cloudless nights. The way the chill bit through a little deeper. It was nearly impossible to begin the journey, but as soon as it did, it all unfolded rapidly.

SOUND: CRACKLE OF THUNDER, FOLLOWED BY ONSLAUGHT OF RAIN, CAR WIPERS, SLICK ROAD SOUNDS, TINNY RADIO PLAYED LOW UNDER

DAVID: Jesus Matt, slow down!

SOUND: CAR SWERVE

MATT: Look, I got it, okay! ...It's just these wipers suck.

DAVID: Sure it's not your driving?

MATT: Screw you!

DAVID: Bet you'd like to. (BEAT) You really know where we're going?

MATT: Of course I do! (BEAT) The turn's... It's one of these roads on the left here. It's coming up.

DAVID: I have \*no\* idea how you talked me out of Harvest Fest.

MATT: You can go hang out with all your stoner friends and get groovy some other time. This is my last chance to see the house before it gets sold.

DAVID: By the sounds of it, it'll be good riddance. Didn't you say the thing's crumbling down?

MATT: No! I mean, it's a little beaten up, but it's got a lot of history. And it's right on the ocean.

DAVID: Great. (SARCASTICALLY) Think we can do a little bit of fishing?

MATT: (BUYING IT) Oh sure, man -- you can catch stripers right off the rocks.

DAVID: (MOCK EXCITEMENT) Stripers? Sounds like a party! (LAUGHS) Forgive me while I indulge in a little of what I'm missing.

SOUND: CRACKLE OF CELLOPHANE WRAPPER, PICKING SOUND  
WITH FINGERS.

DAVID: Ah... Fresh, local, organic.

SOUND: CAR SCREECH.

DAVID: Matt, what the hell!

MATT: It's the turn!

DAVID: You spilled my stuff all over the place!

MATT: Deal.

DAVID: I shall, in my own peculiar way.

SOUND: FLICKING OF A LIGHTER. INHALE, FOLKY SONG  
ON RADIO TURNS TO REGGAE BEAT, TURNED UP

NARRATOR: Two elements were colliding with one another, just as they had the last time I was on the road to this place. Something alive and free, and something darker. I didn't let on to the dark side, but I knew it was there. Just outside my vision.

SOUND: MUSIC CUTS OUT BRISKLY TO STATIC.

DAVID: Oh man...

MATT: Isn't that funny?

SOUND: CAR DECELERATES; RIDES ONTO SLICK GRAVEL/MUD  
MIX. RAIN DRUMS ON THE HOOD AS THE CAR  
IDLES.

DAVID: What?

MATT: This is where that kid got his eyes gouged  
out last year.

DAVID: Screw you, man!

MATT: No I'm serious -- see that rock? There's  
still black paint from where his car hit it.  
I guess they hosed it off, scrubbed it, the  
whole deal, but they couldn't get it off.

DAVID: Man, shut up!

MATT: That's the lake he almost drowned in, that's  
where the truck pulled up...

DAVID: Dude!

MATT: (SNAPPED OUT OF IT) Oh, right, well it's  
just funny, isn't it?

SOUND: CAR ACCELERATES AGAIN. FIDDLES WITH RADIO  
KNOB, CAN'T GET RECEPTION.

MATT: Can't get anything out here.

**NARRATOR:** The last miles were always the longest, through the twisting turns of the Blacks Woods and onto a lonely stretch of Rte 1. The rain dissipated on the way, replaced by a palpable fog. By the time we reached the farmhouse, it was thick enough to slice.

**SOUND:** CAR ROLLS ONTO GRAVEL. CAR TURNED OFF,  
SLOWLY WINDS DOWN, TICKS A COUPLE OF TIMES.  
A BRIEF PAUSE

**DAVID:** You know, it was sunny down in Portland...

**MATT:** And it will be here tomorrow! It just gets-  
-foggy sometimes.

**DAVID:** (UNSURE) Sure.

**MATT:** You wanna quit the BS man? It's gonna be a  
great weekend.

**DAVID:** If you say so. At least I've got plenty of  
herb.

**SOUND:** CAR DOORS OPEN. LUSH NIGHT AMBIENCE, SOUND  
OF THE OCEAN.

**MATT:** (REFRESHED) See, now THAT'S what I'm talking  
about! You can't get any closer than this!

**DAVID:** (SKEPTICALLY) I guess not...

MATT: Now, over there, okay -- you see the field?  
Well, maybe not... this WAS an active  
farmhouse, for a lot of years, before my  
great-grandfather bought it.

DAVID: I thought you said it'd been in the family  
forever.

MATT: Well, no, a long time--not forever. (BEAT)

MUSIC: STING

MATT: It was kind of weird, actually.

DAVID: How's that?

MATT: The family that lived here before... sold it  
for quite a deal. (UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE)  
I'll tell you the rest later.

SOUND: FEET CRUNCHING OVER GRAVEL, WOODEN STEPS,  
ATTEMPT TO OPEN A DOOR, BUT LOCKED.

MATT: What the--! This door has never been  
locked.

DAVID: (TIREDLY) I thought you had the key.

MATT: Well, not for this door. I didn't even  
think this one had a lock.

DAVID: Or maybe you just don't remember it. For  
Christ's sake...



MATT: Hold on, I'll get it!

SOUND: TRIES TO OPEN WOODEN DOOR USELESSLY.

DAVID: Look, I can just break this window.

MATT: Hey! No! David, come on!

DAVID: What? You want to camp outside then?

MATT: We can probably get in through the back door.

DAVID: (RELUCTANTLY) Fine...

SOUND: DOWN WOOD STEPS, THEN PATTERN THROUGH THE GRASS.

DAVID: So about this house... Is that another one of your spooky stories?

MATT: No! Even worse--it's true. The mother... she went mad. No one knows why she did it, but they found the husband with an axe in his head, and the children tied to a stone in the water.

DAVID: Jesus! What is it with you people down here?

MATT: They found her hanging from that apple tree.

DAVID: ...Over there?

MATT: She was blowing in the wind when they found her (DRAMATICALLY) Creak, creak, creak...

DAVID: Okay, I get it!

MATT: As a child, I swore I could sometimes see her swinging there, and hear the apple tree creaking... creak... creak... creak...

DAVID: Matt!

MATT: ...And the children screaming when the waves crashed on the rocks.

DAVID: Dude, you're a freak!

MATT: (CHUCKLES)

DAVID: (FRUSTRATED) Where's this stupid door?

MATT: Right around the corner here. (ASIDE) This is the barn they found the husband in, by the by.

DAVID: Give it up, man. (PAUSE, THEN "HUMPH")

SOUND: JIGGLES A DOORKNOB.

DAVID: Any other bright ideas?

MATT: I guess we'll try one of the windows.

DAVID: There's a brick right here, I don't know what you mean by \*try\*, but --

MATT: This isn't my house man! Com'n, I'm sure one of the ones out front is unlocked.

DAVID: This is not my idea of a fun night.

SOUND: MORE SLOSHING THROUGH THE GRASS. DAVID HUMS UNDER HIS BREATH

DAVID: (SUNG) And so I keep on walking...

SOUND: CRUNCH OF BROKEN GLASS. FOOTSTEPS STOP.

DAVID: Hey!

MATT: What?

DAVID: This window's busted out.

MATT: Oh... to the basement?

DAVID: Unless you freaks built the pantry underground.

MATT: No, well...

DAVID: Let's check it out.

MATT: I'm not going down there!

DAVID: Fine then. Hand me the flashlight.

SOUND: PRESSURE ON THE GLASS, CREAKING WOODEN FRAME.

MATT: Uh... from what I can remember... there's a stairway that leads to a trapdoor, from there you can get in and come around to the front if you want.

DAVID: Sounds easy enough.

MATT: Yeah, but--

DAVID: But what?

MATT: Nothing. You sure you want to do this?

DAVID: Of course I do. I ain't scared! (LAUGHS)

SOUND: HEAVE OF EXERTION AND CRACKLE OF MOTION  
ACROSS GLASS, FOOTSTEPS LAND ON HARD EARTH.

DAVID: (ECHO) (COUGHS) God, no one's been down here in years, have they?

MATT: Not that I can remember.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS WALK ALONG GRAVELLY FLOOR.

DAVID: (ECHO) I can tell... You got rats bigger than my dog down here man, and I've never seen spiders this size... And--wait, what's that? Holy crap! It looks like... like there's something in the corner, maybe, some kind of den here... Let me get a better look.

MATT: Wait, David!

DAVID: (ECHO) Yeah, it's--it's really weird, like, there's all kinds of rat skulls on it, and... is that blood? Oh, oh no, something's moving! It's coming for me!

SOUND: CLATTER.

DAVID: (SCREAMS)

MATT: David? David?!

SOUND: ALL SILENCE

DAVID: (ECHOED LAUGHS)

MATT: SCREW YOU MAN!

DAVID: You've been doing it to me all night. Now where's this stairwell...

SOUND: DISTANT CLAMBERING, CREAKY STEPS, MUSCLED NOISE, THEN THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT. AT LENGTH, A WIND PICKS UP, "CREAK, CREAK, CREAK"

MATT: (QUIETLY) That's not even funny.

SOUND: CREAK, CREAK, CREAK.

MATT: I'm... not going to turn around. You... do not exist.

SOUND: CREAK, CREAK, CREAK. DISTANT, DISTORTED  
CHORUS OF SCREAMS, A CHORUS OF VIOLENCE.

MATT: You... do not... exist... You do not...  
EXIST!!!

SOUND: STRANGE SOUNDS STOP. RETURN TO CRICKETS AND  
OCEAN. SOMEONE APPROACHES THROUGH THE  
GRASS.

DAVID: Matt, what's up with you man? I thought you  
were going to meet me up front?

MATT: Oh, yeah, well... I thought I heard  
something.

DAVID: What was it?

MATT: Nothing.

MUSIC: OMINOUS MUSIC RETURNS

NARRATOR: As I stood at the door, both excitement and  
apprehension flooded through me. Many years  
has passed, and I had no idea what to  
expect... good, or evil. The door hummed  
with energy as I stood before it, nearly  
springing backwards on its rusty hinges to  
welcome my presence again.

SFX: DOOR CREAKS OPEN, FOOTSTEPS OVER CREAKY WOOD  
FLOOR

MATT: Well, here we are...

DAVID: And what a dump it is. I thought you told me this place had power?

MATT: It does.

SFX: FLICKING A LIGHT SWITCH SEVERAL TIMES.

DAVID: Not right now it doesn't.

MATT: That's strange. Maybe the bulb's burnt out.

DAVID: I tried all of them.

MATT: Oh, hum...

SFX: STEPS FORWARD ON THE WOOD FLOOR

NARRATOR: It felt like no time had passed at all. The same creaking floorboards, the same rustic walls, the blackened wood stove, the antique rocking chairs, the player piano... hardly anything had changed. The house was older, yes, decaying, but its character was unchanged. As I finished surveying the house, there was just one thing that I didn't expect.

MATT: What the hell is this?

DAVID: (APPROACHES FROM BEHIND) Who's she? She's pretty good looking, huh?

MATT: Eww! That's probably my great-grandmother!

DAVID: Look it says right here... "Lady Sarah Polk." Polk, what kind of name is that?

MUSIC: CRESCENDO

MATT: Her name.

DAVID: Huh?

MATT: The lady who--uh, you know--

DAVID: Oh... jeez! What's it doing on the wall then?

MATT: I don't know. I've never seen it before.

DAVID: What do you mean? It must've been here for a long time.

MATT: Well I don't remember it. It's... not even covered with dust.

DAVID: (BLOWS) Huh... well how 'bout that.

MATT: Come on, it's giving me the creeps.

DAVID: (DISTORTED VOICE) Lady Polk-a, Lady Polk-a--

MATT: DAVID!

DAVID: (LAUGHS) Who's got who scared now?

MUSIC: WITH NARRATOR, GROWS TO A CLIMAX...



NARRATOR: Despite it being out of place, the portrait drew me closer. If only I could.. touch it.

DAVID: (CONTINUE CHANT, BEFORE STOPPING ABRUTPLY)  
...Polka, Lady... Matt! Don't touch it!

SOUND: AS MUSIC CLIMAXES -- SNAP! CRASH! ENERGY  
HUMS TO LIFE

DAVID: What the hell!

MATT: (GASPS FOR BREATH)

DAVID: Matt! Are you okay?!

MATT: (PANTING) I... feel like something huge just left my body...

DAVID: What the hell dude... And what the... HOW THE HELL DID THAT GET THE LIGHTS ON?!

MATT: I... don't know.

DAVID: --An electrical short. The thing was grounding out, you completed the circuit right?

MATT: ...Sure.

SOUND: LONG PAUSE

DAVID: I'm going to go get my stuff.

MATT: Sure.

DAVID: I'm just gonna get my stuff and head to bed, okay?

MATT: Fine.

DAVID: And I'm keeping the goddamn flashlight.

MUSIC: OMINOUS INTERLUDE

NARRATOR: The energy had returned. (DEEP BREATH, THEN REFRESHED) I knew that I was meant to be here, that it was right being here, that somehow there was something about this house that needed me as much as I needed it. And though the reason was yet unclear, I had a feeling that I'd find out soon enough.

MATT: (APPROACHING) So you've got your pick of any of the rooms down this hall -- they're all bedrooms, that door leads to the attic, but the room over here's pretty nice...

SFX: DOOR CREAKS OPEN

DAVID: (DISTANT) How about this one?

MATT: Oh. Well I wouldn't--

DAVID: It's got a nice view of the ocean, nice big bed, mm... maybe even it's own bathroom.

MATT: Well I mean, I wouldn't, ah...

DAVID: What?

MATT: I always had nightmares in that room.

DAVID: You were a kid, dude.

MATT: Really, really bad nightmares. It was...  
her room.

DAVID: Can it man. I'm sick of you trying to spook me.

MATT: Suit yourself. I'll be at the end of the hall.

DAVID: See you the in the morning. (EERILY) If you last the night...

SFX: DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

MUSIC: DARK, INTROSPECTIVE, HEART POUNDING  
NUMBER...

SOUND: MEDLEY OF RECOLLECTIONS FROM EARLIER SCENES  
"LADY POLKA, LADY POLKA," "CREAK, CREAK,  
CREAK" AND SUCH, DISTORTED, ECHOING, DRAWN  
OUT FOR 20-30 SECONDS BEFORE A BLOOD-  
CURDLING CRY RINGS OUT, DISTANT. CRASH OF  
GLASS.

MATT: (WOKEN FROM SLEEP) Wh-huh? David? (BEAT,  
THEN LOUDER) David! (LOWER) Dammit.

SOUND: CREAKING OF SPRINGS, FOOTSTEPS ON WOOD FLOOR. AMBIENCE IS MOSTLY QUIET. FLICKS SWITCH, THEN SEVERAL MORE TIMES ANGRY.

MATT: (LOWERED VOICE) Of course. And that bastard took the only flashlight...

SOUND: CLUMSY STEPS SHUFFLE ACROSS FLOORBOARDS; DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

MATT: David? David, are you okay?

SOUND: STEPS SHUFFLE FORWARD ACROSS CREAKY FLOOR. DISTANT CREAKS FROM NO DISTINCT SOURCE

MATT: David, hey, David! Did you fall or something? I heard a crash!

SOUND: DOOR PUSHED OPEN.

MATT: Jesus! Oh Jesus, oh God... okay...  
(CROAKED) David? DAVID!!!

SOUND: SLOW STEPS FORWARD, CRUNCHING ON GLASS.

MATT: (QUIVERING, BARELY INTELLIGIBLE) There's...  
so much blood...

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS PAUSE.

MATT: Where the hell is he?

SOUND: DISTANT PIANO NOTES, UPBEAT JAZZY TUNE

MATT: And what the hell is that?

SOUND: TENTATIVE FOOTSTEPS

MATT: ...It's downstairs.

SOUND: DESCEND, SLOWLY, A CREAKY STAIRCASE, PIANO  
GROWS LOUDER STILL, FROM THE NEXT ROOM,  
ACCOMPANIED BY THE SOUND OF ROLLERS, PLAYING  
THE SONG "MAC THE KNIFE"

MATT: The player piano...

SOUND: APPROACHING PIANO, LISTEN TO THE TUNE A  
LITTLE LONGER, "SNAP" OF A SWITCH, SONG  
ENDS. A BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE.

DAVID: (WHISTLES, SINGS DARKLY) Could that someone-  
-be Mack the Knife?

MATT: Wh-David!

DAVID: (CREEPILY) Com'n, I was enjoying it!

MATT: What the hell, man? What was that screaming  
all about? There's blood all over your  
room!

DAVID: Hmm?

MATT: There is, I mean... At least, I heard, and  
when I went in there...

DAVID: (EERIE LAUGH)

SOUND: FLOORBOARDS CREAK

MATT: Hey, uh, not so fast, man...

DAVID: I found the coolest thing I've got to show you... it's down in the basement.

MATT: David... you're covered in blood!

DAVID: You won't believe it till you see it.  
Com'n, it'll only take a second.

MATT: What's going on? WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?!

DAVID: (EVILLY) Nothing.

NARRATOR: (AMUSED) And then he grinned, a big, boyish, toothy grin, revealing that his teeth, too, were coated in fresh blood.

DAVID: Boo!

MATT: (SCREAMS)

MUSIC: ACCELERATED AND TERRIFYING

SFX: FOOTSTEPS RUSH ACROSS FLOORS, THEN START FURIOUSLY BATTLING WITH A DOORKNOB THAT WON'T OPEN.

MATT: (FRUSTRATED) What the... hell!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS FOLLOWING CLOSE BEHIND.

DAVID: (HARD OF BREATH) I broke the key off, it shouldn't open.

MATT: What!

DAVID: You're pretty fast quarry, you know? Be proud of that. It makes it more exciting.

MATT: You're... crazy, David. I don't believe this!

DAVID: You don't have to! RAAHHHH!!!

SOUND: TABLE BUDGED ROUGHLY, STRUGGLING THROUGH SEQUENCE OF CHAIRS AND THEN RUSHING ACROSS WOODEN FLOORS, UP A SET OF STAIRS.

DAVID: You can't hide from me!

SOUND: WOODEN DOOR SWUNG OPEN, SLAMMED SHUT, STEPS RUSHED OVER ESPECIALLY CREAKING WOOD THAT GIVES A LITTLE TOO MUCH WHEN STEPPED ON.

DAVID: (DISTANT) Think you'll be safe the attic?

SOUND: STRUGGLE AGAINST WOODEN WINDOW--WON'T BUDGE.

MATT: (PANTING) God...dammit! Who the hell boarded up this thing?

SOUND: DOOR SHAKING, THEN BURSTS OPEN AS STRUGGLE WITH WINDOW CONTINUES.

DAVID: (DISTANT) Oh Ma-at... Matty-Matt Matt... where could you be?

SOUND: FOOT STEPS BEGIN SLOWLY UP THE STAIRS

MATT: (UNDER BREATH) There used to be a sword up here...

SOUND: STEPS GROW CLOSE, DAVID'S HEAVY BREATH.

DAVID: Ah-hahaha... The attic (SNIFFS) I know you're in here, Matt, wherever you are--I can SMELL you.

SOUND: STEPS CREAK ONTO THE WEAK FLOOR.

DAVID: Come out, come out wherever you are...

SOUND: STEPS CONTINUE TO CREAK.

DAVID: Now... you wouldn't be hiding in these old clothes, huh? Smelling like mothballs?

SOUND: CLOTHES HANGERS PUSHED BRISKLY ALONG A METAL RACK.

DAVID: (BREATHING HEAVILY)

SOUND: STEPS APPROACH FROM BEHIND, SHTK-ICK!

DAVID: AHHH!!! You mongrel!

MATT: Dammit!

DAVID: You think you can get me with this little stick!

SOUND: INHUMAN, GUTTURAL SOUND, JUMP TO A THUD ON THE FLOOR, WHICH CRACKS SOME, SOUNDS OF A STRUGGLE, JAW SNAPPING, TO WHICH MATT



SCREAMS, AS A SOLID CRUNCH COMES FROM  
BENEATH, THE FLOOR RIPPING OPEN AND A HUGE  
CRASH FOLLOWING; DAVID SCREAMS.

MATT: (PANTING HEAVILY) Oh shit... David? David!  
Are you all right?

NARRATOR: Time stood still as my awareness reeled,  
still battling to believe that this was  
real, that this was happening.

MATT: Oh, Jesus...

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS RETREAT, SLOWLY, THEN DOWN A  
FLIGHT OF STAIRS, THEN ANOTHER...

NARRATOR: Then thoughts tearing through the mind, a  
scrambled mess of what is happening what has  
happened and what could be, twirled around  
madly with the imminent need to survive,  
searching for the right way to act in that  
confused and unknown moment.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS STOP.

MATT: David...? David, I mean, did you bring some bad acid here or something? I'm, uh, gonna call the cops, maybe. Maybe an ambulance. How's that? (SILENCE) Christ, your forehead looks bad. Let me, let me see if I can, maybe I can get some of that glass out of there...

NARRATOR: And as skin touched, the energy surged alive again.

DAVID: (HOWL OF EXTRAORDINARY PAIN AND ANGUISH)

MATT: Hold on, man, wait, I can explain, I was just trying to help...

DAVID: (UTTERLY INHUMAN, PRIMAL CRIES OF DESPAIR)

MATT: GET THE HELL AWAY FROM ME!

MUSIC: TERRIFYING FRENZY

SOUND: RUSH CREAKING FLOOR, HEAVY PANTING FOR A MOMENT, A DOOR OPENED, SLAMMED, OPEN, SLAMMED, FOOT STEPS SCRAMBLED, OPENED, SLAMMED, FOOTSTEPS CAREEN CLOSE, CRIES OF ANGUISH CLOSE, STARTS BANGING MADLY ON A BOLTED DOOR.

MATT: If I can just get down there...

DAVID: (ROARS)

MATT: SHUT UP! SHUT THE HELL UP!

SOUND: TRAPDOOR PULLED OPENED, STEPS RUSH DOWN,  
DOOR SLAMMED SHUT, BOLTED. DOOR ABOVE  
CRACKS AND OPENS WITH A RUSH OF SPLINTERS,  
PULLS FURIOUSLY AT TRAPDOOR, WHICH BEGINS TO  
BUCKLE.

NARRATOR: A single dangling lightbulb lit the musty basement, as dark and foul as it had ever been, full of the smell of damp and dying things, the rats, the terrible thing that must be buried down here. That thing that had its most power here, in the dark place, where even I feared to go.

SOUND: TRAPDOOR FOUGHT WITH MADLY AGAIN, CRACKS

NARRATOR: Possibilities swam out amidst a mess of survival instincts, fear and madness. The cracked open window, with the night air beyond it, and an ax lodged deep in a stump, rusted clear to its handle but doubtless still with an edge. I scrambled towards the likeliest chance.

SOUND: SEVERE BREATH PANTING, FEET RUSH ACROSS A  
FLOOR, SCATTERING DEBRIS AS IT GOES, SENDING

RATS SQUEAKING, RUSHING CLUMSILY TO A  
CONCRETE WALL, SMACKING INTO IT--

MATT: Ungh!

SOUND: SCRAMBLING TO GET OUT THROUGH THE CONCRETE  
HOLE, CRUNCHING GLASS, GLASS BITING INTO  
FLESH--

MATT: Ahh!!

SOUND: FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM, MATT STICKS HIS HEAD OUT  
TO THE FRESH AIR, SOUNDS OF THE NIGHT AIR  
AND CRASHING OCEAN, AS THE TRAPDOOR BURSTS  
OPEN, AND A FRENZIED CRY COMES FROM BEHIND

MATT: AHHHHH!!!

DAVID: (ROARS MADLY)

SOUND: OUTSIDE SOUNDS END ABRUPTLY AS BODY THROWN  
BACK ONTO THE CONCRETE, SOUND OF A BLADE  
PULLED LOOSE

MATT: (SCREAMS MADLY)

SOUND: AND A ROUND OF HORRIBLE, BRUTAL HACKING  
SOUNDS BEGIN

MATT: (LOTS AND LOTS OF SCREAMING)

DAVID: (CRIES HIMSELF)

MUSIC: REACHES A DISTURBING CLMAX IN THE SYMPHONY  
OF SCREAMING VOICES, BUTCHERING SOUNDS AND  
DISTORTS INTO A DREAMLIKE CHAOS THAT BURSTS  
OUT, OVER AND FADES.

SFX: SOUND OF OCEAN SLOWLY BEGINS TO RISE, CAR  
DRIVES UP, OFF. CAR DOORS OPEN, KIDS COME  
DASHING OUT.

TIMMY: Yay, we're home!

FATHER: (LAUGHS, THEN, SATISFIED) Ah... yes we are.

BETHANY: Can we go play by the ocean?

FATHER: You'll have to ask your mother...

MOTHER: (JUST GETTING OUT OF CAR) We're NOT playing  
anywhere until we've had lunch.

KIDS: Awww...

FATHER: That's okay, we can play pirates later...  
and maybe go pick from the apple tree.

TIMMY: Can I go in the basement again? That place  
is SO cool!

FATHER: (LAUGHS) Maybe later. We've got a lot of  
time here, guys. A whole lifetime to enjoy  
it.

**NARRATOR:** It wasn't until the new ones showed up that I realized why I had been called back. Why we had to do another sacrifice. Life was returning. The dark thing needed a hand to feed it lest it fade away forever. And I, flowing like I did through bodies, wood and stone, was that hand. As trapped as it was, doing the thing we had done for centuries for the only reason we ever had: survival.

**FATHER:** That's funny.

**MOTHER:** What?

**FATHER:** The door's open. I thought I'd locked it.

**MOTHER:** Really?

**FATHER:** ...Forget it. Welcome to our new home, guys.

**SOUND:** DOOR CREAKS OPEN, DARK GROANING MUSIC RISES

UP.

THE END