

THE FOREST

Written by

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EXT. FOREST, DAY

THOMAS 16, riding on horseback through a forest. He is chasing a group of three hideous monsters. He is dressed extravagantly, in medieval finery, with a fantastical flare. His expression is happy, full of life. He is lost in the thrill of the hunt. He edges his horse on.

THOMAS  
You can do it boy.

The horse runs faster closing the gap between them and the group. He grins and lifts on hand from the reins. He points at one of the monsters and a beam of white light shoots from his finger towards it. It takes a glancing blow and veers off from the group.

THOMAS (CONT'D)  
I've got you now monster.

He leaves the rest of the group and chases the injured one. The horse runs even faster, quickly closing the gap between them and the beast. As he gets nearer it's body starts to move and contort. It becomes very slightly human shaped, but before it can change anymore the boy shoots it with a beam of light. He ruffles the horses mane in celebration.

THOMAS (CONT'D)  
Well done bo-

Before he can finish he clutches his head in pain. The audience hear a heart monitor speeding up, then there is a flash of light.

INT. KITCHEN, DAY

MOTHER pacing a modern day kitchen, that looks a bit dirty and worn down, having an angry conversation on the phone. Boy, 6 years old, is pacing with her and laughing.

MOTHER  
What do you mean I haven't paid the bill? I bloody well went and paid it two days ago!

Puts hand over phone for a moment.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Thomas will you please stop that.

She continues the conversation. THOMAS continues pacing, giggling under his breath.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
So your cutting off the -

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The MOTHER holds the phone away from her face, in disbelief and anger.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
For fuck's sake!

She flings down the phone on the counter in rage and continues pacing. THOMAS continues to copy her.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Thomas. Stop please. Mummy's trying to think.

He continues.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
I said STOP!

She slaps him round the face. He falls to the floor crying. She looks horrified and quickly scoops him up in her arms, rocking him gently.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Shh, Shh, Shh. It's ok Thomas. I'm sorry, mummy didn't mean to hurt you. There there.

EXT. FOREST, DAY

THOMAS lets go of his head and wipes a tear from his face. He looks mystified. His horse neighs as if in worry. He rubs the horses mane and smiles, edging him on to chase the other two monsters.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

Scene suddenly cuts to the same boy, but he looks younger, about 10. He is dressed in a simple hospital gown, in a hospital bed. He has tubes a wires sticking in him, connecting him to various monitors and machines. His eyes are closed. His face shows a hint horror.

Voices can be heard talking about the boy next door.

MOTHER  
Is he going to be ok doctor?

The doctor looks at her a moment, as if he's not sure what to say.

DOCTOR  
We can't find any indication of cranial haemorrhaging from the trauma or any other cause for his coma.

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She swallows and bites her lip, eyes shining with tears.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry but there isn't much  
hope.

A tear runs down her face.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
All I can suggest is that you try  
talking to him. Sometimes a  
friendly voice can help.

MOTHER  
Thank-you.

She nods at him and goes to leave the room.

EXT. FOREST, DAY

THOMAS has the second monster in his sights and is grinning eagerly as he draws closer to it. This one starts to morph, change. This time the audience recognise the shape as being woman-like. It is destroyed by a beam of light from THOMAS' hand, again he clutches his head in pain, and we hear a heart monitor speeding up. He falls off his horse to the floor.

INT. HALLWAY OF HOUSE, DAY

We see THOMAS, this time 8, pull on a red school jumper. MOTHER is on the phone.

MOTHER  
Ok thank-you doctor, I'll pick up  
my prescription this afternoon.

She hangs up the phone and leans down to THOMAS. She pulls down his sleeves a little, as if to hide something.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Remember if anyone sees the bruises  
you tell them it was an accident  
ok? You were playing and you fell,  
that's all.

THOMAS nods sullenly. MOTHER smiles at him and gives him a hug. Camera cuts round THOMAS' back to see a worried look on MOTHER's face.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, I'm really sorry. It'll  
be ok. Mummies gonna get help now.  
She'll be better. It won't happen  
again. I promise.

She pulls back and they smile at each other.

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INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

DOCTOR  
Wait a moment.

She turns

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
How did you say he got like this  
again?

Her eyes clouded

MOTHER  
(sounding slightly hysterical)  
He fell... he fell down the stairs.  
He'd left one of his toy cars at  
the top of the stairs, and well you  
know.

The doctor looks at her quizzically for a moment before  
nodding. She goes next door.

There is an over the shoulder view of the doctor writing on  
his clipboard. He writes 'Child Abuse' before putting down  
the clipboard and picking up the phone.

EXT. FOREST, DAY

THOMAS is chasing after the final monster, a wild glint in  
his eye. He seems desperate somehow as if he has to catch it.  
His horse is running faster and faster, frothing slightly at  
the mouth.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

MOTHER stands in the doorway of THOMAS' room for a moment,  
her hand upon the frame. She stares at him, tears welling up  
in her eyes. The boy stirs slightly and she steps forward.

EXT. FOREST, DAY

The monster stops and turns. It looks bigger, more ominous  
than the others.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

MOTHER  
Baby... she stares at his face, I'm  
sorry baby, I promise it won't  
happen again. Come back to me...  
please...

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She steps forward again, his body gives a more noticeable shake.

EXT. FOREST, DAY

The thing contorts and twists, it seems to be made of pure darkness. The change slows as the creature reaches a more recognizable shape. That of a MOTHER. Though the face is not yet clear.

The horse reels, sending the boy crashing to the ground. He gets up, dazed and stares at the beast. It's face fully coming into focus. It is recognized as the MOTHER in the hospital room.

He stares up at it horrified, and grabs his head as it fills with pain.

INT. FRONT ROOM, DUSK

The room is dark, except for an orange lamppost that shines through the window, it cast's almost scary looking distorted shadows. THOMAS(10, the audience can see that this memory is recent) is sitting in on the carpet with a box of felt-tip pens and some paper. He has a look of concentration and happiness on his face as he draws.

MOTHER and a man can be heard shouting in hallway. The camera stays on THOMAS during this.

There is the sound of the front door being slammed. MOTHER walks in, her face dark. THOMAS quickly picks up his picture and shows it to her.

BOY

(Beaming)

Look what I did mummy!

She looks at for a second and a brief smile flits over her face. This was soon gone when she looked behind the boy. The felt tips had bled through the paper and stained the carpet. Her face changes into a mask of anger. She grabs her child.

MOTHER

WHY DID YOU DO THAT!

THOMAS screams.

BOY

I-I-I'm sorry, sorry mummy. Mummy  
I'm sorry.

She throws him to the ground and grabs him by the shoulders. The boy starts to cry and plead.

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MOTHER

I asked WHY?!

BOY

I- I don't know. I didn't mean too.  
I'm sorry!

Tears stream down THOMAS's face. MOTHER starts to bang his head against the floor repeatedly. Again and again, up and down. Suddenly his crying stops. She snaps out of it. She looks down at him horrified. She places him down gently and picks up the phone.

MOTHER

Hello emergency services... I need  
an ambulance... my son... it's  
bad... ... he fell down the  
stairs... thank-you, please come  
quick.

She puts the phone back down, lifts her son into her arms and cries.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

THOMAS is struggling in his bed, tossing and turning.  
Whimpering at some unknown foe.

The MOTHER steps forward and touches his face lightly to comfort him.

EXT. FOREST DAY

The monstrous abomination reaches out to touch him.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

The boy screams. His vitals shoot up. Machines beep like crazy. His body is in spasms, moving uncontrollably, The doctor rushes in, closely followed by a nurse.

DOCTOR

What did you do!

MOTHER

Nothing! Nothing! I just touched  
him!

Tears well up in her eyes. The scream continues as the doctor takes her from the room. The NURSE fuses over the boy trying to calm him.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

(sobbing)  
But my boy! My baby boy!

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EXT. FOREST, DAY

There is a blinding white light and the creature is gone.

The boy's scream stops. He looks around, hurt, confused. His horse comes over and nudges him affectionately. He looks up at the horse and smiles.

BOY

Good Horsey

He gets back on his horse and rides off.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

The boy's vitals normalise and a smile sets on his face. The camera stays focussed on the boys face, although we hear the doctor come back in and talk with the NURSE.

DOCTOR

How is he?

NURSE

(Worried)

His vitals have stabilised... but I think we've lost him. Whatever just happened is too much of a shock to his system. He seems to have regressed even further than before.

DOCTOR looks down at the boy

DOCTOR

I'm so sorry...